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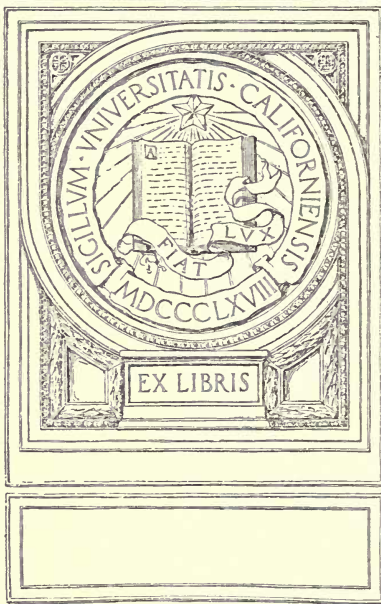


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WILLIAM NISBET:

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES



ristides, jurist, was
the county, Ga., Dec. 7,
English and Scotch de-
scent, was a physician
who afterward resided in
Georgia. He emigrated to Georgia
and became a man of promi-
nent position. He rep-
resented Greene county
in 1819. In 1819 he re-
turned to Georgia for the
purpose of educating his
children.

When the son Eugene
was sent to Powell-
ton, and at the age of
thirteen entered the South
western S. C. The following
year he entered Franklin college,
graduated in 1821 with
honors. After leaving college he
studied law under the office of
A. S. Clayton, seven months.
He then took a regular course
in the law school of Judge
Powell, being still under age,
he passed the passage of an act of
the Georgia legislature, and at once
entered the bar, and at once
practiced law in Georgia. At the age of
thirty and had hardly reached
thirty. A few years of
extensive and increas-
ing practice. At this time Mr. Nisbet
and his family, were especially
friendly with the Troup and
the former representa-
tives of the Federalists.
He was elected Governor Troup.
He was elected to the house
of representatives, where he
was returned to the
only one term. His
family had been some of
that body. In 1837
he was elected as a whig, serv-
ing, 1843, having been

re-elected at the end of his term; the fact of such a
re-election when his fellow party candidates were
defeated, is evidence of the high esteem in which he
was held by the people of the state. In politics,
while he was a strict constructionist, so-called, he in
1840 supported William H. Harrison, and in 1844
Henry Clay. On leaving congress he resumed his
law practice, refusing renomination. When the
supreme court was organized, he was elected one of
its judges and was subsequently re-elected, sitting
on the supreme bench of Georgia for eight years.
It is stated that Judge Nisbet drew the original
resolutions dissolving the connection of the state of
Georgia with the American Union, at the time of the
outbreak of the civil war. He was a member of the
Confederate provisional congress. Of positive char-
acter, he was, nevertheless, most gentle and kindly
in his manners both as a citizen and socially. For
forty years he was an elder in the Presbyterian
church. Judge Nisbet died in Macon, Ga., March
18, 1871.

NISBET, Charles, first president of Dickinson College (1785-1804), was born in Heddington, Scotland, Jan. 21, 1736. He took the theological course at the University of Edinburgh, was graduated in 1760, and began immediately to preach. His first charge was a Presbyterian church at Montrose, and his eloquence soon gained him a more than local reputation. During the war of the revolution his sympathies were with the colonists, which caused dissatisfaction among his people, and gained him some obloquy. When Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa., was



established in 1783, Dr. Nisbet was called to the presidency. He landed in this country in June, and was inaugurated July 4, 1785. Some difficulty arising with the faculty in the conduct of affairs, particularly in the arrangement of the studies, he resigned in 1786, but a reconciliation being effected, he was re-elected the same year, and held the position up to the time of his death. Dr. Nisbet was a profound scholar, and besides administering the affairs of the college, delivered lectures on systematic theology, philosophy, logic, and *belles-lettres*. His works were published after his death, and a memoir, by Dr. Samuel Miller, in 1840. His library of rare and valuable books was presented to Princeton Theological Seminary. He died at Carlisle, Pa., Jan. 18, 1804.

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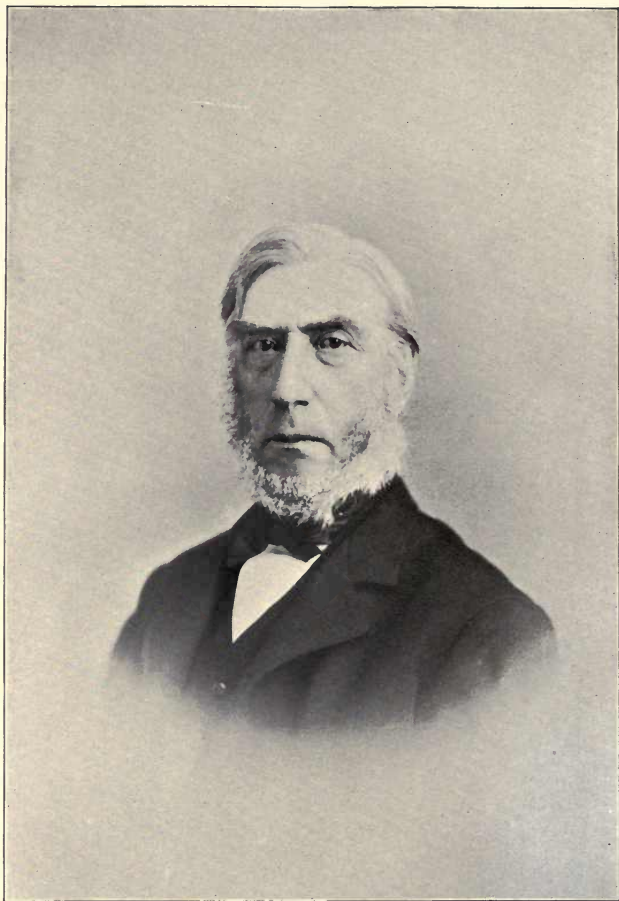
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James Nisbet

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William Nisbet

WILLIAM NISBET:

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

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*My Pilgrimage, or Journey,
from
Infancy to Old Age,
with
Sketches of Scenes by the Way.*

WILLIAM NISBET.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LIBRARY
DUBLIN

1816-1830.

I WAS born at St. Mary's Isle, near the ancient town or burgh of Kirkcudbright, Scotland, July 21, 1816.

St. Mary's Isle, an island by nature, but made a peninsular by art, is located in Loch Dee, or Kirkcudbright Bay. It is about a mile and a half in length, and nearly half a mile in breadth. The centre of the peninsular is about one mile from Kirkcudbright. It is one of the most beautiful and romantic spots any where to be found—being finely diversified with green fields and woods, beautiful gardens and pleasure grounds. It is the property and residence of the family of the Earls of Selkirk, a family of great wealth, noted for liberality and good taste. The fields and groves abound with wild flowers, and are vocal with the songs of innumerable birds, while its rocky shores are the favorite resort of numerous sea-fowl. It contains the remains of an ancient monastery, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, hence its name, together with other relics of a past age. Stretching away to the southward of the isle, a fine prospect is presented of the ocean, the shipping in the bay, with its rocky headlands and the Ross Isle at its mouth, and the Isle of Man in the far distance. To the eastward, across the bay, which is here from one to two miles in breadth, are seen wooded hills, fertile fields, farm and cottage houses; the sites and ruins of ancient churches and forts, and steep rocks washed by the restless ocean's waves. Conspicuous among these objects rises Drummole Hill,—the Cærbantorigum of Ptolemy, the Roman historian and geographer,—the site of an ancient British city and fort which defied the conquering legions of Rome. Many remains of Roman camps and forts as well as those of the ancient inhabitants are also found in this district. The view from Drum-

more Hill is one of the finest in Britain, affording, on a clear day, an extensive view of portions of the three kingdoms—England, Scotland and Ireland. Away to the northeast Ben Carron rears his oft mist and snow capped head.

Turning to the westward, the same varied scenery meets the eye. The opposite shore is nearer, more rocky and steep. The remains of the ancient monastery of Senwick are seen on a cliff near the sea. This monastery was pillaged by pirates in ancient times. The pirate-ship was wrecked the same night, on a sunken rock near by, and all the crew perished. More to the southward lies Balmungan Bay, a safe retreat for the storm-tossed bark; the Ross shore, with its frowning precipices, “where the sea-fowl hath her nest,”—the scene of many a marine disaster and sad tale; the hills of Borgue and Twynholm, with Cairnsmore’s blue mountain, far to the westward, close up the view. To the northward is seen the ancient steeple of Kirkcudbright, the church spire, the old castle walls, and the tops of some of the houses peering through the trees. Still farther beyond, the lovely vales of Dee and Tarf rise in many a varied shape and size; the heather-covered hills and moors of Galloway, fraught with legend and story, where many a hard and bloody battle was fought to stay the hand of the tyrant and invader. Among these hills and glens, in many a lonely grave, sleep the saint and martyr, awaiting the sound of the last trumpet to call them forth to a glorious resurrection.

This is a brief sketch of the scenery around my childhood’s home, from which I never strayed more than twenty miles away, until I was nearly fourteen years of age. Many years have passed away since I bade it farewell. Far have I wandered since, and much have I seen, yet I have seen no place so fair, no place so dear to me as the spot where I was born. Sweet St. Mary’s Isle! my dreams, my thoughts are oft of thee and the loved ones that dwelt in thy peaceful shade, in that dear old ivy-covered cottage, with its flower beds, amid the trees by the shore of the sea! Methinks I see thee arrayed in thy summer robes of green; thy daisy-decked meadows with cowslips, lily and rich hawthorn; thy groves and woods of spreading oak, elm and sycamore, bold larch and tall ash

and pine ! Thy ancient chestnut trees, too, with apple and pear, planted by pious monks of old ! There, in silent and umbrageous retreat dwell the sweet violet, the wood-sorrel, the primrose and harebell, with virgin's bower, ivy and woodbine. There, "courting more the bright orb of day," on the dry sunny banks and braes that skirt the woodland and the shore, grow the yellow broom and furze, the sloe, the wild rose, the eglantine, thyme, the bluebell and heather ; while sea-pink and lavender fringe the beach and rocky shore. All radiant in beauty, breathing fragrance, speaking peace and telling of the hand divine that formed them all.

I think I tread again thy shady woodland paths, or stray along thy pebbly shore, or walk through thy blooming gardens decked with flowers from many a clime, and orchards laden with choicest fruits. I think I see thy green grassy banks, and clear crystal fountains, thy arbors, bowers and summer seats, sacred to meditation, friendship and love !

And the birds ! Ah, I love to think of them, their nests, their gleesome song and play, so bright, so free and gay. The early lark, the mellow-songed mavis, or thrush, the clear-toned blackbird, the warbling linnet and bullfinch, the little wren, the sprightly goldfinch and sweet robin, the mournful cooing dove and strange cuckoo, and all the other feathered array that lit up the fields and groves with music and song. And I love to think of the wilder denizens of the sandy beach, the rocks, the islets and the sea, brave gull, the great diver, the light-winged sea-mew, the kittywake and stormy petrel, the wild duck, teal and gannet, the queer auk, the stately heron, the light-tripping sandpiper, snipe and plover ; the cunning lapwing and shy curlew, and all that scream and soar and pipe and dance to the music of the dashing wave.

What a scene of beauty and song thou wert to me, O fair isle, in those bright summer days and calm, peaceful soul-soothing evenings ! If the mind can feel such real delight in beholding and musing upon the works of nature in this world of sin and sorrow, how great must be the happiness of those who shall dwell in the paradise of God forever ? That new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

In the scowling days of winter, when the wild winds were

raving and the ocean had awoke in his majesty, what scenes sublime and terrific have I viewed, when sheltered by some rock, by the brink of the sea, listening to the thunder of the waves as in anger they lashed the rocky and opposing shore, strewing the beach, as if in triumph, with many a fragment of doomed ships, and at times, too, with the ghastly bodies of the hapless crews.

O, ocean! do I not know that thou art unmerciful, treacherous and cruel? How many of those I have known and loved hast thou not swallowed down thy remorseless jaws and in thy caverns deep has sought to hide them away! Thou hast my brother, a brave and noble youth, and bosom companions not a few. But, oh! thou wasting, destroying sea, a voice shall yet sound in thine ear, and the dead in thee thou shalt give up, and thou thyself shalt pass away and be found no more!

Familiar to my ear were the sounds of the dashing wave and the wild scream of the sea-fowl. It was music to my soul. Would I could hear it again and feel the same emotions. Oft with straining eye and anxious heart have I watched the distant storm-stressed bark, as the shades of the wintry evening were closing in the day, midst howling winds, flying clouds and dashing spray, toiling and striving to make the much-desired haven; approaching nearer and nearer, until I could count her masts and the number of her reefed and torn sails and see the movements of her gallant but wearied crew, until at last in thickening darkness I could hear the rattling of her chain cables and see her tall form swing to under the lee of our sheltering isle, proclaiming the anchor was cast, the danger over and that sound would be the sleep that night of these wanderers of the briny deep.

What reminiscences of thee, loved isle, can I not still call forth! Long separated and far distant from thee though I be, and from loved parents, kind brothers, gentle sisters, dear friends and companions—how oft I think of you! you who still sojourn on earth. “Do you now and then send a wish or a thought after me?” How bright our evening fire did burn; how happy the hearts and glad the faces that gathered around that hearth and sat around our goodly table. There kind

friends and neighbors often came ; music and song arose ; the story and the tale of other years was told ; there, too, the thrifty needle was plied, and often was read the sacred and the historic page ; there, merry childhood's laugh was heard, and bright youths' noisome glee, a mother's loving voice, and a father's counsel wise and grave. Long ago he left that house, I doubt not, for "*one eternal and on high.*" My mother, too, has joined him ; there, too, have gone brothers and sisters, who like them "were obedient to the faith" and "fell asleep in Jesus."

Goodly and fair wert thou, O home of childhood and youth. Nought shall e'er efface thee from my memory, but thou canst be my home no more. With all of earth thou shalt pass away. Its Maker has declared, "The earth and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." Changed and purified, but not annihilated, I believe. But He who can make all things new, will rear instead a glorious fabric, where sin and pain, sorrow and death shall never enter. There, "The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying ; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." There death-divided friends shall meet to part no more, but "shall be forever with the Lord." Towards this better land, this abiding home, my hopes arise, my desires cling and my efforts strive.

LINES*

COMPOSED UPON SEEING AN ENGRAVED VIEW OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT
AND VICINITY, PUBLISHED BY J. NICHOLSON.

Thou dearest spot on earth to me,
Thou sylvan islet of the Dee,
My native home — Saint Mary's Isle —
Where nature's beauties ever smile,
Methinks I see thy face once more,
I trace thy rocky winding shore,
And view thy fields and groves of song
I've loved so well and missed so long.

* Published in the *Kirkcudbright Stewartry Times*, Scotland, Nov. 22, 1861.

Ah ! there's the tree I loved to climb
 With joyful heart and pliant limb,
 My flag to wave, and take survey
 Of hill and valley, sea and bay.
 There is the beach where oft I've bathed
 And launched my skiff, by fear unscathed,
 To bait my lines with cunning care,
 Or, sly, the wild sea fowl to snare.
 Around that hill, amidst these trees,
 Where softly blows the fresh sea breeze,
 There stands the cot where I was born,
 Fair shrubs and flowers the spot adorn,
 The honey suckle drapes the door,
 And ivy wraps its walls all o'er ;
 The robin there finds safe retreat,
 The thrush and linnet warble sweet ;
 Brothers and sisters there did play,
 Our home it was for many a day ;
 A full and happy band were we,
 Alive with health and life and glee ; —
 Our parents, wise and good and kind,
 Our duty taught us well to mind ; —
 While fostering and gentle lay
 Our own loved chieftain's kindly sway.
 (Thou house of Douglas — noble line !
 May fortune's favors still be thine.)
 Our home we loved — but, ah ! its light
 Went out one sad and doleful night ;
 Our father, long our childhood's guide,
 Left us — and then we scattered wide, —
 In other lands found homes, found graves,
 One sleeps beneath the ocean's waves ; —
 Their memory oft I still recall,
 For dear to me were one and all.

Upon that farthest point of rocks,
 That stoutly braves the sea's rude shocks,
 I've often stood and fixed my eye
 On gallant ships swift sailing by,
 And longing, waited for the times
 When I should visit distant climes.
 The time did come. I mind the day
 When first from home I sailed away.
 Of many lands, much have I seen,
 But happier never have I been
 Than when I strolled by thy fair strand,
 In thee, " my own, my native land."

I've roamed all o'er these rugged shores —
 Wild Ross and Borgue, and rocky Torrs ;
 I've climbed Drummore camp's lofty steep,
 And Raeb'ry that o'erhangs the deep.
 That lonesome island's beetling crags
 I've searched them well for sea-bird's eggs.
 Yes ! every hill and moor and vale,
 For me, hath both a name and tale.
 The martyr's lonely grave is there ;
 The ancient towers with walls all bare ;
 The battle-fields where heroes fought,
 Oppression stayed and freedom bought,—
 For Roman, Saxon, Norman, Dane,
 All strove these goodly hills to gain ;
 But our bold sires maintained the place,
 And brave and free yet is their race.
 Full many a tale the aged tell
 Of fates that lovers fond befell,
 Of haunted glens, of shipwrecks dire,
 As they sit round the evening fire.

Thou ancient town of worthy fame !
 I see thee as thou wert — the same !
 Thy castle's wall, thy tall church spires,
 The thoughts of these my bosom fires ;
 Well known to me 's each pleasant street —
 Were I at thee, friends would I meet —
 Like mariners of thine who roam,
 I still call thy dear site my home.
 By river side at close of day,
 I used to take my flute and play ;
 When hours of school or toil were past
 With kindred minds I felt quite blest.
 The very school I can discern,
 Where lessons I did daily learn ; —
 Where now 's the joyful company
 That once met there in revelry ?
 Dear comrades, ever brave and true,
 What is the tale and fate of you ?
 O, that some kind one would me tell
 Aught of the friends I loved so well.

The picture now I'll lay aside,
 And from the vision I will hide ; —
 My heart with memories is so full,
 My feelings I can scarce control.
 Of early homes and friends bereft —
 Yet, for me one bright hope is left

Of home and happy friends above,
 Where reigns pure peace, with joy and love.
 To that fair land beyond the skies,
 I'll raise my hopes and lift my eyes,
 For earthly scenes fast fade away,
 Then night gives place to endless day.

WILLIAM NISBET.

MILLVILLE, MASS., 1861.

My parents were James Nisbet and Helen Nicol. My father was bred to the business of gardening, in which, as well as in a knowledge of botany, he attained great proficiency. In the capacity of gardener, as well as that of forester and land steward in connection with St. Mary's Isle, he was employed by the proprietors. This respectable and comfortable situation he held at the time of his death, having faithfully fulfilled it during the long period of thirty-three years. His father was a native of Haddingtonshire and died in the town of Haddington at a very advanced age, in which place he taught a school. He was much respected and bore a very excellent Christian character. My mother's father was John Nicol, gardener at Raith, near Kirkcaldie. He was author of several religious pamphlets, and pastor of a Berean church, a branch of orthodox Congregationalists, and father of the well-known horticultural author, Walter Nicol. Our family, by my father's side, are of an ancient and honorable stock,—the Nisbets of Nisbet, or "Nisbet of that ilk." The name, like most ancient ones, is *local*, from their lands of Nisbet in the county of Berwick, where the site or ruins of the old family castle is still said to be pointed out. These lands were possessed by one Phillip, about the time when surnames were commonly adopted. In the reign of King David the First, of Scotland, he was a witness to a deed of land granted by that king to the monks of Coldingham, in which he signs his name "Phillip De Nesbyth." This grant of land was made about the year 1124. His descendants afterwards signed their names, as in the days of Wallace and Bruce, "De Nisbet," and latterly, "Nisbet." This Phillip had four sons, who founded four branches or houses of the name. Our family believe them-

selves to be of the Dirleton branch, in Haddingtonshire. Many of the name and family of Nisbet rendered good service to their country in ancient times, for which, several of them received public honors, rewards and knighthood. They joined the standard of Wallace and Bruce and fought in the great and decisive battle of Bannockburn. To this day they have traditions of this, and pride themselves not a little upon the fact as I well know. They fought also among the Crusaders to recover Palestine from the Saracens.

Some of the name professed and suffered for "the faith once delivered to the saints," before the advent of Luther or Knox, and one of them, Murdock Nisbet, possessed a copy of the New Testament, written by his own hand in a cave. The original copy I believe belonged to some of the persecuted Waldenses who settled in Scotland many centuries ago. Not a few of them found martyrs' graves during the awful persecution in the seventeenth century. I learn these facts from "Nisbet's Book of Heraldry," the "Scot's Worthies," and other written and traditional sources.

The people of Scotland have a considerable amount of pride of ancestry. In some instances, doubtless, this is carried too far. I know I have had a good deal of this myself; indeed, too much. But as I grow in years I view such matters in a very different light. I doubt not we are descended from a good stock, but we need not make much account of this farther than by way of a little historic interest. We cannot trace all the connecting links very far back with unerring certainty. Let us ever remember that the greatest honor, the highest privilege and blessing is to be Children of God thro' faith in Christ Jesus; compared to which, all such matters are less than nothing and vanity. Had I to write this story of my life, as well as other things I have written, over again, I would try and do it in a better manner, although I have done the best I could, and have written all truthfully and honestly, and with the best of motives.

WILLIAM NISBET,

May 9, 1881.

I know very little of the history of our family by my mother's side, except that her relatives were very respectable people. The well-known Professor William Nicol, of Edinburgh, was her cousin. I believe she was related to the Warrender family of Lochend, in Haddingtonshire. I have

been told her grandmother or great-grandmother was a daughter of Sir George Warrender, and that having contracted a marriage with a person of lower degree, although of good character, she was, in a measure, discarded by her relatives.

The following narrative is a copy of an account written by my eldest brother, James, in 1843, and now in the possession of his son John:—

About the year 1718 a daughter of Sir George Warrender, Baronet of Lochend, became enamored of a baker in Edinburgh, of the name of Samuel, whom she subsequently married against the remonstrances of her friends. Samuel was a remarkably handsome man, of good character, and wealthy, and after some time the Warrenders became reconciled to the marriage. After Mr. Samuel's death his widow married his foreman, who proved a dissipated spendthrift. This marriage so displeased her friends that they ceased to countenance her. She had two children by Mr. Samuel, a boy and a girl. The boy took his mother's marriage and the conduct of his stepfather so much to heart that he secretly left home and was never again heard from. The daughter married a Mr. Nicol, said to have been "in the farming line from the South country." Mr. Nicol died before his wife, leaving two sons. The eldest was the father of the late Professor William Nicol and his sister, Miss Nicol, of Edinburgh. The other was my grandfather, John Nicol. The boys might have been educated at the well-known and ancient "Heriot's Hospital" in Edinburgh, thus showing that their father must have been a respectable and reputable man. But their mother was too proud of her descent to consent to this, and so educated them at her own expense. They were both of them able and good men, my grandfather being notably so.

The present representative of the family is still (1878) a Sir George Warrender, who possesses large landed estates in Haddingtonshire, or East Lothian, as it is often called. Brunsfield house in Brunsfield Links, Edinburgh, belongs to him, being his city residence. It was built in the year 1605, and was doubtless the residence of the family at the time the lady chose to ally herself with the handsome baker, as Mr. Samuel was generally called.* My brother James says in his narrative: "I remember having heard a curious legend of a chamber in this house, which had been shut up for a hundred years, having been opened up again some twenty years ago. I recently visited it. The person who showed it to me says it is still called the 'ghost room.' The history of it is detailed in some of Sir Walter Scott's novels. My mother, who has seen her grandmother, says she lived in the Cannongate, Edinburgh, and died at a very advanced age, about the year 1793. She is described as a very

*Sir George Warrender was Lord Provost of Edinburgh during the *troubulous times* of the *Stuarts*, and rendered most valuable service to the government,—the present *Dynasty*.

lively, high-spirited old lady. Miss Nicol says her father resided upon the property of Lochend, and she and her brother were born there. I think it probable my grandfather must also have resided upon the property, my mother being born, as she told me, in East Lothian. Whether the Warrenders ever acknowledged the connection, I know not." From this it would appear the Warrenders did not entirely ignore this branch of their family. Mr. Nicol being an agriculturist, very probably was employed as some kind of manager on the estate, or may have held a farm on it. The above-mentioned Miss Nicol and her brother were very intimate with my brother and his wife, as well as acquainted with and on good terms with all our family. She was well acquainted with her grandmother, from whom she learned the above particulars. The old lady made her presents of various articles; among others, a very remarkable pair of sheets, nearly two hundred years old, which she said she would bequeath to my brother James's wife.

From the above account it would appear that I am a lineal descendant of the Sir George Warrender whose daughter married the "handsome baker." I have been told that the above singular marriage, with its attendant circumstances, forms, in some shape or other, the subject of one of "Wilson's Tales of the Borders and of Scotland." I would not like to vouch for the certainty of this.

When I lived in Edinburgh in 1835, I had some acquaintance with a very respectable family of the name of Samuel, the head of which, a venerable old gentleman, carried on, I think, an extensive business as a candle-maker. As the name is very rare in Scotland, never having known another family of the name, it is possible they were relatives of my ancestor of that name.

Lochend house and the adjoining landed estates of the ancient, honorable and wealthy family of Warrender in Haddingtonshire, in the south-east of Scotland, I know very well, having lived two years in that neighborhood. I also know Bruntsfield house. It is a large, antiquated, gloomy-looking edifice, surrounded by a high wall with iron gates, the house being nearly hidden by old trees. It stands near the Nunnery on the verge of the "Links," and is well known to the people of Edinburgh. The "Links," with the adjoining "meadows," form a very extensive and ancient public park. Professor Nicol, who was never married, died in the year 1851. *Harper's Magazine* of that year gave a lengthened account of him, which I have cut out and elsewhere preserved. Independent of every thing else, he is and will ever be known to the scientific world as the "inventor of the single image prism of calcareous spar" known as "Nicol's prism." He left quite a sum of money to my brother James's family. His sister, too, Miss Nicol, has long since passed away. She acted as her brother's housekeeper. In early life she was betrothed to a young officer in the army, who was killed in battle. Although she had subsequent offers of marriage, for his sake she lived and died single. She was a very intelligent, kind, dignified, silent, sort of a lady. My cousin, John Nicol, son of my mother's brother John, died during the

present year. He was formerly a well-known Edinburgh builder and architect, who finished Sir Walter Scott's monument in that city. He left no children. He lost the wife of his youth in early life, and for her sake, it is said, never married again. With him have gone the last, I believe, of the name of Nicol, who are relatives of mine. They were all of them a good and talented race.

My maternal grandmother was Margaret Welsh, a most excellent Christian woman, daughter of Robert A. Welsh, farmer of Ladykirk, in Berwickshire. She, with her beloved consort by her side, and several of my uncles and aunts are buried in Abbotshall churchyard, Kirkcaldy; my father and brother Robert, in the old churchyard of Kirkcudbright. My mother and five sisters sleep in the Sight Cemetery at Glasgow. The rest of that bright band "lie scattered now far and wide, by mount and stream and sea." All but me alone, still lingering here, waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest.

"A few short hours of evil past,
We reach the happy shore
Where death-divided friends at last
Shall meet to part no more!"

Brother James is buried in Calton Hill Cemetery, Edinburgh; John, at Caledon, Tyrone, Ireland; Henry, at Tobermory, Isle of Mull; Isabella, in Warriston Cemetery, Edinburgh; Douglas, "midst forests of the West," at Cheraw, South Carolina. Walter "lies where pearls lie deep," in the bosom of the dark, blue sea. And I (shall I say it?) hope, when my earthly race is run and my warfare over, to lay me down to rest on the brow of the hill that greets the first rays of the rising sun, by the brink of the placid waters of the fair Seekonk, where the flowers will bloom, the pine trees wave, and the birds sing sweetly over my peaceful bed.

WILLIAM NISBET,

December 9, 1878.

My parents were both religious people, very strict and exemplary in all their conduct, and were members of the Presbyterian church. They possessed a degree of intelligence and mental culture seldom found in people of their humble sphere of life. Their great aim was to bring their family up in the fear of God and give them a good education.

There were seven sons and six daughters, all of whom grew to maturity. Their names were: James, an attorney, who died in Edinburgh in 1849, leaving several children; John, who was gardener and land steward to the Earl of Caledon, at Caledon, Ireland, where he died in 1831, leaving

a daughter, who is now in Ray County, in the State of Missouri, with her mother, who married a Mr. Oliphant; Margaret, a dressmaker, who died in Glasgow in 1854; Walter, a sailor, who perished with the ill-fated New York and Liverpool packet-ship *Pennsylvania*, along with about one hundred of her passengers and crew, near Liverpool, in the terrific January gale of 1839; Robert, a gardener, who died at Saint Mary's Isle in 1830; Henry, an attorney and banker in Tobermory, Isle of Mull; Helen, now Mrs. Hamilton, of Glasgow; Isabella, now Mrs. Wilson, of Edinburgh; myself; Jane Wedderburn, a teacher, who died in Glasgow in 1855; Elizabeth Catherine, a dressmaker, who died in Glasgow in 1855; Douglas, a book-keeper in Charleston, S. C.; Mary Anna, now Mrs. Fergusson, of Glasgow. All I shall say of these, and I am happy to be able to say it, is, that none of them have brought any reproach upon the good name of their parents.

I was early taught to read by my mother, and when about six years of age was sent to a "dame's school" in the town of Kirkcudbright; shortly after, like all my brothers and sisters, I was sent to the excellent academy in that place, about a mile and a half from my father's house. It was a most pleasant walk, the way being partly along the seashore and through green fields and woods. Here in common with all my brothers, in addition to the ordinary branches of an English education, I received some knowledge of Latin and Greek. I was by no means a diligent scholar, being far too fond of play and reading other books than those prescribed by my teachers. In vacation times and before and after school hours, I was wont to help my father in the gardens in gathering fruit and other kinds of work. At this time, during the minority of the Earl of Selkirk, my father had the produce of the gardens instead of a fixed salary. I was fond of straying along the shores of the isle, as well as those of the bay and beyond its mouth, picking up fragments of wreck, watching the waves, the sea-fowl and the ships; or wandering through the woods after flowers and birds' nests. In the early days of childhood the isle seemed a world in itself to me. I used to wonder what lay beyond the hills that surrounded each side of the

bay; or far away out to sea where there was naught but water and sky. As I grew older I became more venturesome and built a rough boat and paddled along the shore, or farther out among the isolated rocks, setting my lines for fish or traps for sea-fowl, at which I became quite expert. I learned to preserve and stuff the skins of birds, and securing a work on Ornithology, I studied it eagerly and knew the names, the classes and orders of birds very well, together with their habits, places of nativity and resort. This was far more congenial to my taste than studying Latin and Greek lessons.

Twice I was boatwrecked and in danger of being drowned. Often did I form one of a party of boys who for a whole day would stroll many miles away along the rough shores of the Solway Firth, visiting its resounding caves and scenes of shipwreck, kindling our fire and cooking our potatoes and shell-fish. There was one cave of frequent resort, I remember well, "The Torrs Cave," or "Dirk Hatteraick's Cave," under which name it figures in Sir Walter Scott's tale of "Guy Mannering." It was here "the bold smugglers fell," fighting with the king's officers. When we heard of a shipwreck, no matter what the distance, we hurried to the scene, and sad sights we sometimes saw. Other times we would man a boat and go far outside the bay, on the open sea outside the Ross, as we termed it, and fished, or climbed the steep crags on the island of that name or those of the big Ross, the adjoining promontory, in search of eggs or young sea-fowl, or shot the fowl from the boat as they perched on the cliffs or flew high over our heads. Gathering the samphire plant for pickling, which grew plentifully among these precipices, was another of our feats. Such pursuits are not unattended with danger in these places, life being occasionally the forfeit of too much temerity and daring. Swimming across the Dee at high water and back again, at the point of Castle Dykes, a little below the town of Kirkcudbright, was the great ambition of the boyish swimmer in those days. This at last, I accomplished with ease.

The great yearly fair of Keltonhill, held in the month of June, on the hill of that name, some eight or nine miles north of Kirkcudbright, was another great scene of attraction,

eagerly looked forward to and talked about for months beforehand and sure to be duly and regularly attended by all the ambitious and high-spirited youths of the whole neighborhood. There, thousands of sheep, horses and cattle of all kinds were brought and exposed for sale, together with all manner of merchandise. There, caravans and shows of wild beasts and all sorts of curiosities were to be seen for a few pennies. Music, song and minstrelsy of every kind and degree of excellency was to be heard; the whole in striking contrast to the usual still quietness and seclusion of the district.

I remember, too, the times when a band of us boys would wander far over the hills in every direction, visiting old ruined castles and monasteries and churchyards (the Scottish boy is taught to visit and revere the graves of his fathers), sites and remains of Roman camps and forts, and the strange mounds of earthwork, forts constructed by the ancient inhabitants, it is supposed, no one knows how many long ages ago; the martyrs' graves, the spirit-haunted glen, or ford or bridge, the battle-field and other spots famed in legend and story, such as Threaves castle, the ancient stronghold of the fierce Douglasses, Dundrennan Abbey, where Mary Queen of Scots found refuge after the battle of Langside; here she spent her last night in Scotland before sailing from the little creek near by, which still retains the name of Port Mary, for the shores of her faithless and cruel cousin.

How we used to talk of the valor of our ancestors, and the glorious deeds of Wallace, Douglas and Bruce, and wish we were old enough to be soldiers; and then we would form into battle array and rush up some steep hill, such as Raeberry or Kirkeoch, to capture some imaginary fort, or file off in two parties and act the battle of Bannockburn or Chevy Chase, or march through some little hamlet with our fife playing and colors flying as pleased and as proud as warriors fresh from the field of glory. Nearly all the boys who were of this roving and enthusiastic disposition became either sailors or soldiers as a consequence. Many of them have long since found a watery or a bloody grave on the stormy ocean or deadly field of strife. How probable at one time did it not appear that

such might be my fate too. More than once when a sea-boy I was on the brink of it, but God interposed,—praised be his Name! Many of these dear companions who have met such fates were noble boys indeed—generous, kind, guileless and unselfish, hardy and brave. Thus they perished far from home and friends and the loved scenes of their youth. Already their names except in the memories of some few loving ones are unknown and forgotten. O, how I should rejoice to know their names were written in the “book of life.” A few years ago, when my brother Douglas was about to visit Kirkcudbright, I wrote down a list of my former friends and companions, and requested him to enquire concerning their fate. I was filled with astonishment and sorrow, when he handed me the list, upon his return, with each one’s brief story noted down opposite the name I had written. I learned that more than three-fourths of those of equal years with me, were no more. Hardly any of them died in their native land, and all under forty years of age. Truly, life is “a vapour that appeareth for a little while and then vanisheth away.”

The first shipwreck I remember, made a vivid and lasting impression upon my mind. It occurred in the year 1822, at the close of a cold blustering day in March. The wind began to blow a fearful hurricane—great guns the sailors say. Five strange vessels, the brigs *Joshua*, *Mary Isabella*, *Falcon*, *Dido* and sloop *Wellington*, in running for shelter to the lake, the anchorage ground on the eastern shore of the bay, were driven upon the dangerous sandbar to the westward. The *Joshua*, a large and fine vessel, went to pieces soon after she struck, and with her perished the entire crew. The *Mary Isabella* drove over the bar but sank in deep water. One man sought refuge on the foremast, while Captain Ormsbee and the rest of his crew, seven in number, took to the mainmast, which was soon carried away, and all that clung to it sank to rise no more with life. The man on the foremast was rescued by a lifeboat, the next morning, in an almost lifeless condition. The *Falcon* drifted to the western shore of the isle, where she went down with several of the crew. The rest of them fled to the rigging with the little cabin-boy, who had just commenced his first voyage. He became delirious, calling

continually for his mother, and had to be lashed to the shrouds. In the morning they were taken off by the lifeboat. The little boy was still alive, and was carried to my father's house, and although his body was still warm, every effort failed to revive him. The *Dido* went to pieces on the rocks, off the Inch, a small wooded islet at the point of the isle. The crew fortunately took to their boats in time and were all saved. Attracted by the lights kept purposely burning in our windows, they found shelter in our house. The *Wellington* was driven upon the Queen of Sardinia's rock, on the east of the isle, so called from a ship having a Queen of Sardinia on board, being wrecked there long ago. My father sought the nearest possible position to the sloop, and by his shouts and signs induced the crew to take to their boat, and steering through the proper channel among the rocks, they reached the shore in safety. I have still a vivid recollection of the scene. In the evening, about dusk, a workman came into my father's house and reported that a number of vessels were on the bar. We all hurried out to the shore a few hundred yards off, where we stood holding on to the trees and bushes to bear us up against the fierce wind, while we gazed in pity and agony of mind at the doomed ships and thought of their hapless crews. Later in the evening we were gladdened by the sight of the crew of the *Wellington* reaching the shore. After this I was sent to bed, but was awakened by the shouts and hoarse voices of the crew of the *Dido* seeking shelter. They reached the house quite exhausted, having saved nothing except the clothes they wore. Immediately every thing in the house was at their service and every one ready to help them. Food, clothes and beds were got ready for them. Loudly and fervently they expressed their gratitude at their escape and for our kindness, and their great sympathy and anxiety for the crews of the other vessels. One of them, Tingley by name, an Englishman, never forgot our kindness. Several times in after years he visited us, always bringing some token of remembrance from distant parts,—shells or other curiosities for my mother and an orange-tree cane or something else for my father.

A little after daylight, the crew of the lifeboat came with

the little sailor-boy from the *Falcon*. One of the men had stripped the clothes from off his own back and put them on the boy, and secured by straps and covered with the coats of the men, he was carried from the boat and brought into the house. A surgeon from the town was in attendance, who had him laid in warm woolen blankets. He was rubbed all over with warm cloths. Bottles of hot water were applied to his feet and other parts of his body and every thing done to resuscitate him,—but it was all in vain. His spirit could no longer stay! I remember the anxiety of every one for the boy, especially of my mother. He was a pretty boy with beautiful flaxen hair in long curling ringlets. I remember my mother cut off some of them to keep for his relatives and then they laid him away in the old churchyard. Some weeks afterwards, his widowed mother came all the way from England to see his grave. I remember how sad she was. How everybody pitied her and was kind to her and how highly she prized the locks of hair my mother gave her.

I remember the scene of devastation the surrounding shores presented the day after the wreck. Fragments of boards, planks and timbers of every description, masts and yards, sails and rigging, boxes and bales, provisions and clothing, strewed everywhere, mixed and tangled together. I remember how the people turned out to search for the bodies of the poor seamen and secure the wrecked property from the further ravages of the sea. Not an article was known to be stolen or wrongfully appropriated. All was consigned to the custody of the proper officers and magistrates for behoof of the lawful owners. I remember, too, how the poor sailor saved from the *Mary Isabella* searched the shores for many a day for the body of his kind captain, until it was found. And I recollect some words of the mournful song which a local poet composed upon the sad catastrophe. Truly, then, “there was sorrow on the sea.” There is something peculiarly sad and affecting in the deaths of the cast-away at sea. I often think of my poor brother Walter, whose ship was several hundred miles on her way across the Atlantic, when she encountered the fearful gale that proved her destruction, driving her back to the fatal shores of the Mersey.

At the commencement of the storm he fell from aloft and fell to the deck. All crushed and bruised he was carried below, where he lay some twenty-four hours, no one having time to attend to him. Soon after the doomed vessel struck the deadly sand-bank, two of the sailors, fellow-townsmen, carried him on deck in hopes of getting him on board the lifeboat they were eagerly expecting. No sooner had they done so when a tremendous wave swept him and others overboard. He was seen on the crest of the wave to raise his hand to heaven and heard to cry — "Save me, that can."

I was always fond of reading, especially histories and books of travel, tales of field and flood, old ballads, poetry and legends of Scottish history. The influence of my brother John had a good effect in stimulating me to the acquisition of knowledge. For several years he was head gardener to a Mr. Murray, of Broughton at Cally, near the beautiful village, Gatehouse of Fleet, some ten miles west of St. Mary's Isle. Many a pleasant visit I paid him at that place. He was every way a remarkable man. Very prepossessing in his manner and appearance. Of rare natural ability and had educated himself to a high degree of intelligence. He had seen something of the world, too, and had lived for some time in London, which, as a boy, I thought was something to be proud of, as well as the fact that he had been a trip to sea. In fact, I looked up to him with some degree of awe. He had many books to which I had ready access. He died at an early age of consumption, brought on by a neglected cold caught by attending upon his hothouses. His German flute was given to me as a memorial, upon which I learned to play, being taught by an old soldier. Music I have ever been fond of. With what delight I used to play that flute in the long summer evenings, along the seashore, or in the quiet woods of St. Mary's Isle, as well as among the grand old hills and glens of Scotland, in many places.

That same old flute has accompanied me in all my wanderings by sea and land, and has often ministered solace to my mind in many a solitary hour when far from home or friends. I have it yet, sole relic of boyhood days. These early pursuits and peculiar pastimes are so different from those of city

boys and other localities. I have always pitied the children and youth of cities. How bereft of pure and natural enjoyment. How barren of pleasant memories of early days must the after life of many such be. The beautiful and romantic place I lived in and the surrounding scenery wrought in me a kind of wild, wayward and romantic disposition, tinged with melancholy, which I think has had some influence in hindering my advancement in the world. This I care but little about. My chief regret is, that my life and its influences have tended so little to the glory of God and the good of others.

Independent of other things, I believe the configuration of the country in which a person is born and brought up in, and the surrounding scenery, have a very great influence upon the mind as well as the body of the individual. The harsh and cruel usage I received at the hands of my Latin teacher, who was a great tyrant, and eventually lost both his situation and his reason through his ungovernable temper, was a great injury to me. It broke and chafed my spirit and to some degree made me reckless, indifferent and opposed to regular study. How important and fraught with momentous results are our youthful days, and every situation, engagement and circumstance attending them.

Kirkcudbright, where I went to school, and where my youthful companions chiefly lived, is a very ancient place. It is a royal burgh and the county town of the shire or stewartry of the same name. It is pleasantly situated at the mouth of the river Dee,—the Dee immortalized by the poet Lowe in his sweet poem of "Mary's dream." It has a good harbor, and much shipping belonging to it, for its size. Many of its people follow a sea-faring life. It is chiefly from its port and from being the county town that it possesses any importance, being a long way from the busy seats of commerce and manufactures. For a great length of time the population has been nearly stationary. Nearly all the youth of both sexes, leave and go to other parts of the British isles, the colonies and foreign countries, in quest of that employment which circumstances deny them at home. Being in general very well educated for their circumstances in life, and having good principles instilled into their young minds, they seldom fail to do

well in life. Wherever they meet, all over the world, they act like brothers and sisters to one another. Their kindness and attachment to one another in this respect, is very striking and remarkable, as well as their abiding affection for the place and land of their birth, to which many of them upon whom fortune has smiled, return and spend the remainder of their days. These characteristics are, indeed, common to the Scottish people in general.

The population of the town is about three thousand. There is reason to believe that in ancient times it was much greater. When the Romans invaded Britain, it is said, there was a town on or near the same spot, called Benutum, belonging to the Selgovi, a tribe living on the shores of the Solway Firth, which likely has derived its name from them. Bede, the most ancient British historian, speaks of it as a place of importance in his day. It was such in the times of Wallace and Bruce. During the wars of the Scots and English, it was the scene of many a conflict. It was then surrounded by a wall and deep ditch, the remains of which are still visible. It was once besieged and taken by the English. At another time it was pillaged by the Manxmen, or Isle-of-Man people. It is said to have been once laid under contribution by the Moors or Rovers of Salee.

Paul Jones, who was a native of the district, and at one time sailed from the port, during the American Revolutionary War, anchored in the bay and landed on St. Mary's Isle, and carried off the silver-plate belonging to the Selkirk family, being constrained to do so by a discontented and partially disorganized crew, which, much to his honor, he ultimately bought from them, and returned to the owners. The scenery around Kirkcudbright is very fine. The town is well and regularly built and kept very clean and in good order. The inhabitants have fine, large gardens, public walks and commons,—privileges conferred upon the inhabitants in olden times. In the town itself, and especially in the surrounding country, there are many interesting remains of antiquity,—as old churches, castles, forts, mounds, roads and bridges. From some of the heights near the town, there is a magnificent view of the adjacent country, the English shores, the Isle of

Man, and at times the mountains of Mourne in Ireland, and I have heard say, even a portion of the north of Wales, together with many conspicuous hills and mountains in Scotland. Chalmers, in his "Descriptive Gazetteer of Scotland," says : "Kirkcudbright, with its environs, is among the six prettiest towns in Scotland. The country around is well wooded. The Dee, the bay, and the Solway Firth abound in excellent fish, while the woods, hills and moors afford plenty of game, such as hares, rabbits, pheasants, partridges and many varieties of moor and waterfowl. Much of the district is of a pastoral nature, being well suited to the rearing of sheep and cattle, although there are many fine farms of arable land around."

Kirkcudbright is the most southerly town in Scotland, and is one hundred miles southwest of Edinburgh, and the same distance south of Glasgow ; east of Belfast in Ireland, and northwest of Liverpool. The Isle of Man, and Whitehaven in England, are each about thirty miles distant. Dumfries is about twenty-five miles to the eastward, and Ayr about sixty miles to the northward. The name is pronounced "*Kirk-cu-brie*," which, I believe, it derives from St. Cuthbert, who established a church or kirk here, many centuries before the Reformation. The people of this part of Scotland, although perhaps in some degree deficient in a certain outward polish or grace of manner and speech, will compare very favorably with any people in the world in real intelligence and morality. Drunkenness is or was their great besetting sin. The same may be said of any other locality in Britain. In early life they are taught to be economical, frugal, self-denied and hardy. From principle, even the wealthy deny themselves many luxuries and effeminate habits. They are kind to one another in distress and have always been noted for hospitality to strangers. They are in general, very proficient in a knowledge of the Bible, which indeed accounts for the amount of good there is among them. I never saw the Sabbath-day better kept,—perhaps I should say, so well kept, as in this quarter. I never recollect of hearing even an idle boy whistle on that day. There is a great amount of true piety and religion among the people. I never have lived where there was more, or perhaps as much in proportion to the number of people. In olden times

this part of the country was blessed with the labors of a number of most faithful and devoted ministers and preachers of the gospel. This was the chosen home and stronghold of the pious and persecuted Covenanters. Here the sainted Rutherford, the godly Peden, the fervent Cameron, and many more like them, lived, labored and suffered. Here, "cruel Lagg," and "bloody Clavers," with his savage dragoons, spread desolation and death over a weeping land, dotting the hills and glens with martyrs' graves. But in spite of all, God has crowned and blessed the labors, heard and answered the prayers of a sainted and martyred ancestry, and has caused a goodly measure of the same faith and devotion that actuated the fathers, to descend upon and abide with their children. The memory of the martyred Covenanters is here held and cherished with intense veneration—as well it may. Scotland owes a lasting debt of gratitude to these noble and devoted men. Her Bible, her civil and ecclesiastical liberty, her education, peace and purity of morals she owes, in large measure, under God, to her Presbyterian and Covenanting forefathers. They had their faults, for they were but men, and lived in an age just emerging from popish and mediæval darkness, when the principles of religious toleration were nowhere well understood in the world. But they acted up to the full measure of the light and knowledge they possessed. More than this cannot be said of any man or class of men. In short, "they feared God and wrought righteousness;" and if they were not the salt of the earth, I know not where then in the wide world it was to be found. It was with bated breath and tearful eyes I first heard and learned to talk of their sacrifices and sufferings. Nor has time effaced these impressions from my heart and I trust it never will.

In my early days, many of the people were a plain old-fashioned primitive race. There was no great or general desire to make a display of wealth, or stand upon the dignity of rank and profession in life, to the contempt of persons of lower degree. Many a time have I seen our worthy provost (mayor), who was quite a wealthy man, with his white apron on, and coat off, wheeling his barrow along the public street from the storehouse, where he kept on hand an extra supply of

goods for his retail grocery-shop. Many of the well-to-do farmers used to eat at the same table with their hired servants, while on Sundays the farmer with his wife and family, together with his work people or their families, might be seen walking, or riding together in the same vehicle, on their way to or from the church. If a person was intelligent and of good character, and especially if he had travelled abroad in the world, his poverty did not prove an impassable barrier to his being invited as guest to the house and table of the more wealthy. When Sir Samuel Douglas used to send for my father to consult him about gardening, he always insisted upon his eating at the same table with himself. Colonel Irving, when gentlemen fond of gardening visited his gardens, if it happened to be about the dinner hour, has been known to take them, and his gardener also, into his house to dine with him. He was a widower without children, and of course could do so without offending any one. In the neighboring burgh of New Galloway, Lord Kenmure was the provost, and his gardener one of the bailies, and, according to the custom in such cases, they sat together in the same pew at church. I remember the young Earl of Selkirk calling to see my brother John, when he was gardener at Cally, and taking dinner with him.

The Countess of Selkirk often came into our house and would sit down and talk with my mother in the most familiar way. At the annual New Year's supper and ball, given to the work people and dependents of the Selkirk family, she was always present and was kind and courteous to every one; while her son, the Earl, and her two daughters, the Lady Isabella and the Lady Catherine, joined with zest in the same reel with the dairymaid and plowman.

Among no people in the world is the proper relation of master and servant better understood, and more pleasant, than among the Scottish people, and nowhere is there less envy of the rich and less illwill towards the landholders than there is in Scotland. One reason, doubtless is in the fact that the aristocracy of the country are of the same stock, the same race with the people themselves,—not descendants of a race of conquerors, who in a past age came and possessed them-

selves of the lands of the original inhabitants, as has been the case with England, Ireland and other countries.

In fact, in Scotland, I have often thought the people are not only attached to, but rather proud of their chiefs and landed aristocracy. To this day, I cherish much regard for, and feel under many obligations to, the Countess of Selkirk and her family.

The Scottish people are sometimes charged with being superstitious and given to believe in the supernatural. No doubt there is some ground for such a charge, but from all I have learned and seen, I do not think they are more so than the people of other countries; while they are more free from certain credulous notions and delusions than many other nations, arising from the more general diffusion and knowledge of the Bible. In my native place, as well as in many other parts of Scotland, I have heard a great many stories of apparitions, visions, dreams and warning noises, in the majority of which cases no sensible person had the least faith. Nor do I think these stories had the effect of making the people cowardly or afraid to travel in the dark; and none, certainly, ever pretended that any one was ever bodily injured in any way by such things. But I confess, I have heard of some singular circumstances of this nature, which I believe it is impossible to account for or explain upon any present known principles. There is a danger of people being too materialistic in their attempts to overthrow and eradicate all superstition. It does no good to deny and ridicule every thing of this nature we cannot explain. It is but really very little we do know, while we are surrounded by mysteries on every hand if we only stop to realize the fact. There is certainly nothing in the Bible that condemns all such ideas and belief. The Saviour upon the occasion of his walking upon the sea, when his disciples cried out for fear, supposing him to be a spirit, did not rebuke them for their superstition and declare there were no such appearances. Neither did the apostle Peter, when the disciples declared his knocking at the door and his voice to be that of his angel or spirit. It is not for me to decide whether or not there are such supernatural appearances and noises. I shall only relate the particulars of one phe-

nomenon I saw, and which has ever remained a mystery to me.

One morning in the beginning of the year 1838, I set out from my mother's house, a little before daylight, to go to my work in the gardens at Balmae, some five miles south of Kirkcudbright. It was a beautiful, calm, star-light morning. There was a hard frost but no snow of any account on the ground. I was walking along briskly, being in excellent health and spirits, having no particular subject of thought upon my mind, and entirely devoid of any fear. I had got some half mile or more from the town, on the sand side or shore road, and was passing through the Black Murray woods. I was walking in the middle of the road, a wide macadamized public road, when I saw at a considerable distance on the left hand of the road, what I had no doubt was a man coming towards me. I paid no special heed, looking at times towards the object and then turning my eyes from it. As it drew nearer, I remarked I heard no sound of footsteps. At length when it came within a few yards, I saw that it did not possess the usual and proper lineaments of a man. I stood still. It came still nearer, and slowly crossed the road within a few feet of me and disappeared on the right-hand side of the road, where there was a stone wall and thorn hedge. My eyes rested full upon the object during the time it came up close to me, and while it crossed the road. Instinctively I followed and looked over the fence. There was no gap whatever in the wall or hedge, next to which there was a narrow belt of bushes and trees and then the seashore within a hundred feet of the road. It was about the height and dimensions of a rather large-sized man, wrapt as it were in a thick, black envelope of dense vapor or smoke. I neither was afraid nor lost my presence of mind for a moment, but was beyond measure amazed and puzzled to account for the phenomenon. I resumed my journey and when I reached my lodgings I told the old lady with whom I boarded, an excellent Christian woman, what I had seen. She informed me that for a great length of time back, people had occasionally seen the same object in that same place ; among whom she named her husband, a very worthy and sensible man, then dead ; and two other good and reliable men then living

in the neighborhood, of whom one was the schoolmaster of the district. Indeed, I found out afterwards, that such stories were quite current in the neighborhood.

A few years ago, upon mentioning this circumstance to a respectable person who had been born and brought up in the vicinity, and who had just come out to this country, I was informed that the same sort of appearance had been frequently seen since that time by various reliable people. Tradition says, that the adjoining forest was the haunt of a noted robber and murderer, — a blackamoor or black man (it is generally supposed he was a gypsy). He was eventually killed, by the side of a well or spring, close by the wayside, which is still called the “blackamoor’s well ;” and the forest, the “blackamoor or black murray *planting*,” or wood. The popular mind associates this singular appearance or phenomenon with this tradition.

We ought to have nothing to do with fortune-tellers, spiritual mediums, table-tipping or rappings, and such like things. Reason and Scripture alike declare it to be forbidden ground. And as to sights and sounds, the occurrence of which we can neither deny nor explain their cause,—which cases are indeed exceedingly rare,—while we do not affirm we ought neither entirely to ignore, nor ridicule as the mere vagaries of a timid, disordered and deceived mind and imagination. It does no good to do so ; but often, harm ; nor should we in the least fear such things or trouble ourselves about them ; they certainly can do us no harm. It takes the greatest wisdom and caution in parents to answer the questions of children as to these things. Let them be taught to know, and let all, whether young or old, ever remember, that they who trust in the Lord need fear none of these things, nor any other evil, by night nor by day. Yea, though called to “walk through the valley of the shadow of death,” He is ever with them to care for and protect them. That through life He causes all things to work together for good ; and that death itself is but His messenger to call them home to Himself and to eternal happiness and glory.

1830-1833.

WHEN I had nearly completed my fourteenth year, I left home and went to live with James, my eldest brother, a lawyer, procurator fiscal for the northern district of Argyleshire and factor for several highland estates at Tobermory, in the Isle of Mull, one of the Hebrides. I remember how sad I was to leave my home and my parents, brothers and sisters and companions, and how home-sick I was for many a day. I had to taste of seasickness, too, as I took passage in a vessel named the *Amelia of Kirkcudbright* and had a voyage of several hundred miles around the many headlands and through the intricate channels of the many islands of the west coast of Scotland. Among many other objects of interest, I saw the famous whirlpool of Coryvreckan, which tradition says, sucked down one of the ships of the formidable Spanish Armada. We narrowly escaped being driven ashore on the wild promontory,—the Mull of Galloway,—where we had to put about and run for Drummore Bay, where we lay at anchor, for several days, until the storm abated. At another time, we narrowly escaped going ashore on the rocks off the “Black head of Mull,” during a fog. I thought I saw enough, even during that short passage, to satisfy me that a sailor’s life is one of hardship and danger ; but, after it was over I soon forgot it.

I remained in Tobermory about a year, writing and performing other duties for my brother in his office. Whenever I could find time, I enjoyed myself much in wandering along the shores and climbing the steep mountains of that lonely and rugged isle. From the top of one of these mountains I had a view of nearly a hundred miles expanse all around, including much of the mainland of Scotland, and almost all the many islands of the Hebrides. Shortly after I went to Tober-

mory, my heart was saddened by tidings of the death of my brother Robert, who died of dropsy at St. Mary's Isle. I remember well when I went to take leave of him, upon his bed of sickness, how earnestly and affectionately he commended me to God, and besought me to seek salvation through the merits of a crucified Saviour ; and how he told me I should see him no more. He was a most amiable and pious youth ; never yet have I seen any one more so ; so patient, humble and wise, far beyond his years. He had been an invalid for some years. He was a very stout, hardy boy, but got overheated while playing with some other young men on the seashore, one evening after work, from the effects of which he never recovered. He left a manuscript account of his religious views and experience, which was ultimately printed ; a copy of which I possess. While living at Tobermory, I learned to speak some Gaelic, the language of the people, and became acquainted with many of the peculiarities, history and traditions of that truly primitive, brave and hospitable race. That part of the world seemed at times to me to be very bleak and dreary, especially in winter, when in a great measure we were cut off from the rest of the world. At that time, there were scarcely any trees of any size on the island ; very few singing birds, and scarcely any fruit. I had very few companions, and those of them that could did not seem to care to converse much in English. Not one of them could talk to me in my own sweet and expressive dialect,—the dialect of Galloway, Ayrshire and the Lowlands, the mother tongue of Ramsay and Burns and Scott, and many of the sweetest singers that ever touched the poetic lyre ; not a mere corrupted dialect of English, as some ignorantly suppose, but an ancient language “anglicized”—ancient Danish, the language brought from Scandinavia by the old Caledonians, who came from thence and peopled a great portion of Scotland some centuries before the Christian era. The Saxons, who were a branch of the same people, settled in England some six or seven centuries afterwards ; hence, the affinity of the languages of the two countries, although changed and modified by the admixture of other tongues.

The constraint of passing many long hours in an office, I

felt very irksome. My brother was a man of some note and influence in that quarter, and lived in a higher style of life than I had been accustomed to. Although I was well treated by both himself and his wife, who had a growing family of their own to provide for, yet I never felt very much at home. Upon the whole, however, I spent some happy days in that land of Fingal and Ossian, and listened oft, with enkindled enthusiasm to the music of the warlike bagpipe of the kilted and plaided Highlanders ; and heard with interest and with awe their strange old traditionary stories of ages long past away, and received much of their hospitality and kindness of heart.

There, mountain seemed piled upon mountain in sublime and awful grandeur, embosoming deep, clear, slumbering lakes, margined with wild woods of hazel, birch, dwarf-oak and pine ; among which range the wild deer and roebuck. There, too, shut out from the world by almost inaccessible passes, are lone, peaceful, awe-inspiring glens, wrapt as it were, oft in mourning and gloom by the overshadowing mist or storm-cloud ; there, too, down the steep sides of the dark and stupendous heights, the wild foaming cataract rushes to the ever heaving and restless sea—scenes that fill the mind with a strange mixture of enthusiasm, awe and peaceful sadness.

At length I bade these highland scenes adieu, and turned my face homeward, going by steamer to Glasgow, passing through the Crinan Canal, and from thence by land, through Lanarkshire and Ayrshire, crossing the “Bonnie Doon,” and passing near by the cottage in which Burns was born, which I saw, as well as much of the scenery he has immortalized by his poetry. I traveled also, through a portion of Dumfriesshire, stopping a few days in Dumfries, at the house of a friend. While there, I visited the grave of Burns, and other famed localities. From thence, I traveled home by coach to Kirkcudbright and the isle.

After returning home, I spent some time in needful recreation ; being at that time rather weakly from a too rapid growth of stature, and confinement in my brother’s office, I had got into a habit of leaning forward at my writing-desk, which in some degree affected my chest and created a diffi-

culty of breathing, which was the chief reason of my return home, my brother feeling somewhat concerned, and the physician he consulted advising a change of occupation for a time, at least. My parents were now desirous of finding me employment in a shop or store as a clerk or learner, with the view of my eventually commencing business in Kirkcudbright. No situation of the kind could then be obtained. I journeyed once to Dumfries, and got a promise of a situation, but when I came home and told my parents that the *firm* sold liquor, they very properly refused to let me take it. As a means therefore of occupying my time to some advantage, and improving myself for whatever might transpire, at the desire of my parents, I entered the office of the Messrs. Gordon, lawyers and notaries public of Kirkcudbright, where I was employed about a year, as a copying clerk and in carrying around and delivering messages, letters and documents of one kind and another connected with the business of the office. I now set about to improve my mind in good earnest, for which I had an opportunity, having access to many valuable books. I had considerable time for recreation, and spent many pleasant hours and some holidays with kindred spirits in boating on the Dee and around the shores of the Ross and Torrs, as well as traversing the country far and near, over hill and dale, as our fancy moved us. My fellow-clerks, of whom there were several, were gentlemanly and intelligent ; like my employers, they treated me with much kindness. One of these clerks, a Mr. William Hope, now of Glasgow, had been a classmate of mine at school. He was at this time a pious youth and has ever since maintained a most excellent Christian character. He was a son of one of my old teachers, the late worthy principal of the commercial department of Kirkcudbright Academy. Mr. Donaldson was teacher of languages, and the excellent Rev. William McKenzie, teacher of the English department. Mr. Hope is still a cherished friend and correspondent of mine. Another of my fellow-clerks was Mr. Eneas Gordon, who often formed one of our boating and roaming parties. He went abroad at an early age. I have been told he fell, fighting on the side of the Americans, during the late Mexican War. Alexander McKinnell was another.

He, too, poor fellow, found a bloody grave, being slain during the Texan War. Samuel Rae and Robert Beck, went to sea and were drowned. Robert Douglas also went to sea, and died in Batavia. All of these, more than once, have formed a boat's crew, together with myself, and have spent the hours happy, merry, and free from care; but I am left alone to tell the tale!

I have no doubt had I continued longer in the above situation, that it would have been better for me; but I was then a wayward youth, impulsive and almost entirely regardless of the future.

Soon after I entered the office, I wished very much to learn the gardening business with my father, a business I was ever fond of, and became more fond of it as I grew older, but my parents, especially my mother, did not think it was then best for me to do so. I never liked confinement within doors. It never agreed with either the constitution of my body or mind. Nature, I believe, fitted and intended me to become a gardener or a tiller of the ground in some shape or other. And this I considered especially fortunate, and for which I thank God, for it has been the means of much happiness, health and contentment of mind, that I have had a congenial employment in life allotted to me. How desirable it is that this should be the case as much as possible, with every one. It would be a happier and a better world. During the time I remained in the office, I received no pecuniary remuneration—such a situation being regarded in much the same light as attending a school for mental improvement. I often felt sorry I was doing nothing to support myself, knowing well my father had a large family to maintain, and that his means were quite limited. Several times he attempted to get me a situation where I could earn something, but in that part of Scotland, and in those days at least, it was very hard to find employment, except at the commonest manual labor, and, indeed, it was far from being an easy matter to obtain even that at all times.

At length, when most of my companions had left their homes, I determined that I, too, would earn my own living and see the world—and therefore I resolved to go to sea. I came to this resolution not without some despondency of

heart, and unwillingness to leave my home. Accordingly, having obtained the reluctant consent of my parents, early in the spring of 1833, I bade farewell to desk and pen, and commenced my "cruise," which I finished the same year, arriving safe home in the autumn after, having seen a little of the world, the wonders of the great deep, and the manner of life of those "who go down to the sea in ships." I visited several large seaport towns in Britain and Ireland, and spent some time in the ports of Genoa and Leghorn, in Italy. While coasting along the shores of western and southern Europe, and northern Africa, I got some fine views, which I highly prized, and do still prize, of many celebrated places, cities, capes, islands and mountains. I got good views of Gibraltar, Mt. Blanc, the Pyrenees mountains in Spain, and the Atlas mountains in Africa. During this time I served on board two vessels—the brigs *Eliza Scotland of Kincardine* and *General Brock of London*. The latter was an old and ill-conditioned ship, on board of which we had several casualties,—such as loss of masts, sails and rigging, and at one time we were pinched for provisions and water. The captain, William Jones, was a good sort of man, who took quite an interest in me, and asked me to continue with him longer. This was in Belfast, Ireland; but being then near home and having no great relish for a seafaring life, and having had for some months back a strong impression upon my mind that my father would not live long, and having gone to sea contrary to his wishes, which grieved me not a little, I determined to return home, where I soon afterwards arrived. A few months afterwards I read in the newspapers an account of the captain's death and the casting away of the vessel in the West Indies.

During the short time I was among sailors, I never received any very bad usage. They are a class of men for whom I have great sympathy and regard. They are true-hearted, unselfish and always kind to the helpless. On shore they seem a jolly set of fellows, but at sea they enjoy very little comfort in general, and have quite a different air and appearance. They often look solemn, dejected and forlorn. There is ever a certain something of a mysterious and melancholy nature connected with the unchangeable, untamable ocean. I often

think of this period of my life. It has made a deep impression upon my mind. Among other things, I often think of the sad, strange and marvellous stories I used to hear from these wandering sons of the deep, during the lonely night-watches. This adventure of my youth was in no way injurious, either to my health or morals, but very beneficial to me in various ways. The undertaking from the very first was unpropitious. I worked my passage in a coasting vessel, to Liverpool, where I expected a berth, a friend had got me, on board a West Indiaman, but the vessel in which I embarked was so driven about by contrary winds, that when I reached Liverpool, I found the vessel I expected to join had sailed. Thus, having no friend's house to go to, and hardly any money, I was obliged to take the first berth that I could get, which was by no means a very good one. I had a heavy heart and an anxious mind at that time. Blessed be God! He has long ago overruled all these things for my good. Upon reaching home, I found that my father's health was failing. He proposed that I should now commence gardening, which was a welcome proposal to me. No doubt, he was convinced that it was the best thing for me, and was in hopes that I might aid him in his business, and in the event of his death, if experienced enough, might perhaps succeed him in his situation and thus keep the family together, until able to provide for themselves.

1833-1839.

I NOW commenced "heart and hand" to acquire a knowledge of this healthful and delightful business. I worked hard all day, and employed my evenings and every leisure moment in studying books of horticulture and botany and in gathering and preparing specimens for my herbarium. In the course of six months I had learned the botanical names of some twelve hundred plants, with much pertaining to their habits, use and culture. I never enjoyed so much pleasure before. I hardly ever felt tired, or wished the hours to pass, although my work was quite laborious at times. I felt I was at length engaged in the profession I was best adapted for. My father warmly approved and aided me and I had the satisfaction of knowing he was well pleased with me and had good hopes of my future well-doing. I have often wished that he had lived until I became a Christian. How it would have rejoiced his heart! Not long before he died, when no one was thinking about such an event, he told my mother how well I was doing, alluding also to my deceased brothers, both of whom were gardeners, in a very touching and feeling manner, and then added, mournfully, with tears in his eyes, "Ah, poor Willie will soon be left to follow the business all alone!" This saying was soon verified, for within ten months from the time I commenced gardening he was no more. He died suddenly and unexpectedly after an hour or two severe attack of the disease with which he had been affected, for some time previous, which I believe was some form of heart or chest disease. This sad event plunged us all in the deepest grief. He was a most worthy and exemplary Christian man. To this day, his memory is revered by many in Kirkcudbright. The following notice of his death appeared at the time in the

Dumfries and Galloway Courier, the editor of which was one of his personal friends. It was written by R. Malcolmson, the poet, another friend of my father's who also composed a beautiful poem upon the same occasion, which was published in the same paper and printed for circulation among our friends: "Died at St. Mary's Isle, Kirkcudbright, on the 24th ult. (June, 1834), Mr. James Nisbet, gardener, aged 61 years, deeply regretted by his afflicted family and a large circle of friends and acquaintances. Shrewd, rational and intelligent, he possessed in no ordinary degree, all the social and all the domestic virtues, and it may be truly said of him that a more exemplary character never existed. He creditably filled his late situation, under the same noble family, during the long period of thirty-three years, and gave numerous proofs of his skilfulness in all the departments of horticulture. He was also intimately acquainted with the science of botany, and had long enjoyed the honor of being a corresponding member of the Caledonian Horticultural Society."

Soon after my father's death, my mother and family moved to Kirkcudbright, where she hired a house and kept a few boarders. My father's successor, a Mr. Webster, was a fine sort of man and treated me with much kindness. I remained with him for several months, but it was a great change to me. I could not help feeling sad at times and wishing to be away. Thus, in the beginning of 1835, I went to Edinburgh, and found employment in the nursery gardens of the Messrs. Dickson & Co., Leith Walk. This change was of great benefit to me. My residence in that beautiful and orderly city did me much good in many respects. With a mixture of admiration and national pride I used to look upon the fine edifices, monuments, ancient castles and palaces of the fair capital of my much-loved native land; and gazed with rapture at the scene that opened to my view from the battlements of the old castle, the Calton Hill, Arthur's Seat, or the rugged sides of Salisbury Craigs. These were my frequent resorts in the quiet and repose of the Sabbath evening. But another, a brighter, a more glorious and enchanting view was soon to open to my admiring mental eyes and claim my heart's love and adoration.

Up to this period of my life, I never had any very serious or abiding impression of a religious nature. I bore, I suppose, a pretty good character and certainly never was considered a vicious youth. But no one could possibly have been more thoughtless and regardless of the things of God and eternity than I had been hitherto. Moreover, I had imbibed from some books I had chanced to meet with, and from some people whose conversation I could not well help hearing, no small degree of doubt as to the truth of the Bible, and the person and work of Jesus Christ. I was now full of life, health, high hopes and good spirits. Proud to be able to do the work of a man and earn my own living ; carried away with the pleasures and hopes of this world. In the emphatic words of Scripture, I was living, "without hope and without God, in the world."

On the evening of Sunday, the twentieth day of September, 1835, having called at the house of my brother James, who was now settled in Edinburgh, as a solicitor to the supreme courts, having left Tobermory soon after I did, I happened to read a few pages of "Baxter's Call to the Unconverted," which so forcibly impressed my mind that I resolved to study the Bible ; which I immediately set about in good earnest, and eventually, through the grace of God, became a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Great indeed was the change that took place in my heart, views and manner of life. I became, as the Scriptures fitly express it, "a new creature." This change was manifest to, and remarked by all that knew me. In the words of the sweet hymn, I can say—

"E'er since by faith I saw that stream
Thy flowing wounds supply —
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

In another paper I have written an account of my conversion, religious views and feelings.

In November following, I went to Whittingham, in East Lothian or Haddingtonshire, and for the next two years was employed as an assistant in the fine gardens of James Balfour, Esq., near the foot of the Lammermoor Hills, and a few miles

from the old seaport town of Dunbar. This is a beautiful and fertile district. My father's family belonged to the same quarter, and I learned some interesting particulars concerning them from people of the same name and race. Here, I improved much in the knowledge of my business. The head-gardener, a Mr. Rintoul, was very proficient in his business. His foreman, Mr. John Webster, was a fine young man, smart and intelligent. He is now gardner to the Duke of Richmond, at Gordon castle. I made progress also in the knowledge of spiritual things; indeed, it was while here, some fifteen months after I had read "Baxter's Call," that I came to a "full knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus." I think I spent as happy days in this place, as any one well could spend in this world. While here, I became a member of the parish church, kirk or church of Scotland, which I afterwards left, and joined the United Secession Church, considering that national churches were unscriptural, and deeming the secession church a more pure branch of Presbyterianism. In this connection I was a member of Mr. Paterson's church in East Linton, a faithful and devoted minister of Christ. I entertained a great respect for Mr. Lumsden, also, the parish minister. He was very aged, upwards of eighty, and spoke the broadest Scotch. He was not what people call a good preacher, being nearly superannuated, but he was sound in doctrine and withal a kind, holy man. I doubt not he has long ago gone home to heaven. I look back with feelings of much pleasure, and gratitude to God, to the times I spent here. Shall I ever see that place again?

It was here my first experience of "*bothy*" life commenced. In Scotland, gardening is much more of a profession than in most countries. There are head-gardeners, foremen, journeymen, apprentices, and garden laborers or those who have not been bred to the business and perform the more common and easy-to-be-executed work of the garden. It is customary for the foreman, journeymen and apprentices to keep what may be called, "batchelor's hall" together. The proprietor of the gardens providing a domicile called "a bothy," consisting most generally of two, and sometimes three apartments, according to the number of occupants. It is generally located

in the rear of the hothouses. Beds, bedding, with some plain furniture, dishes and cooking utensils are also provided. The washing of the sheets and towels is provided for, and a plentiful supply of fuel is allowed, as well as a liberal allowance of milk, potatoes and other vegetables. The "lads," as young unmarried men, and especially young gardeners are always called in Scotland, take week about in cooking and house-keeping; a portion of time from the daily hours of work being allowed for this purpose. Ten hours a day, or from six to six constitute a day's work in summer, an hour at nine in the morning and another at one o'clock being allowed for breakfast and dinner. When mowing is done, the men commence very early in the morning while the dew is yet upon the grass, generally at five at the latest, for which an allowance of either money or holliday time is made. Matters in these bothies, are in general conducted in an orderly manner, upon a well-known and defined plan, under the supervision of the head-gardener, the foreman, or oldest journeyman being considered the head of the household. The system, doubtless, has its faults, is open to some objections, and no doubt its liberties are sometimes perverted to evil. But there is no denying the fact, that it has been eminently conducive in raising up a class of excellent gardeners. Living and spending their leisure hours, especially the long winter evenings together, often at a great distance from the attractions of cities, towns and even villages, the very nature of their profession being both conducive to and demanding the improvement of their minds, a spirit of generous emulation in this respect is engendered and kept up. There is a mutual interchange of books and ideas and communication of knowledge and instruction of various kinds. They learn and practice drawing, writing, mathematics, reading and botany, occasionally the classical languages, and frequently singing and playing the flute and violin. On a winter's evening, a bothy with its great blazing, warmth-giving fire, and the engagements and appearances of its youthful, happy and hardy occupants, is often a most pleasing and interesting sight. No doubt there are exceptions, but no one that knows them can deny, that the gardeners of Scotland are, in general, a remarkably intelligent, well-behaved,

and also a well-dressed class of men, considering their means and station in life. The business in which they are engaged, their frequent removals from place to place, and their coming of necessity so much in contact with well bred and educated people, such as the proprietors of the gardens, their families, friends and visitors, is conducive to this. After serving their apprenticeship they seldom continue over one, or at the most, two years, in one place. This is necessary in order to acquire a perfect knowledge of the business in all its departments, few gardens being complete in all these. It is seldom that any one over twenty-five years of age is found living in a bothy; I never knew a married man in one; after that age, they either find head-gardeners' situations in Scotland, or scatter all over the world, as the great majority of them do, in quest of situations, which they are sure to find if capable and worthy, as head-gardeners, managers of nursery and vegetable gardens, and not a few as land stewards, foresters and kindred occupations. The wages of journeymen gardeners is small. It is, or rather used to be, over and above the afore-said perquisites, as they are called, only from eight to ten shillings sterling per week. The average wages of head-gardeners being about sixty pounds sterling a year, with a free house and the same perquisites as to fuel, milk and vegetables, as the journeymen. Some few, however, have as high as a hundred and fifty, and some even three hundred pounds per year. They have in all cases, a right to an apprentice fee from those they instruct in a knowledge of the business. The bothy bill of fare is, or was, almost universally, oatmeal pottage and milk, or as Burns calls it, "the halesome parritch chief o' Scotia's food;" potatoes with milk, brose of oatmeal, or peasmear; wheat bread, generally, but sometimes of oatmeal, with butter and cheese; tea and coffee are seldom used, except on Sunday, while animal food is seldom tasted. This to an American would seem "hamely fare" indeed, but I know not where to look for a more healthy, hardy, proficient, as well as moral and intelligent, class of laborers and workmen than what I have seen in Scotland subsisting on this fare. There is one secret, however, about it, and that is the peculiar virtue and strength of milk, especially when used with oatmeal,

and indeed also with potatoes. If a person gets plenty of good milk he can almost dispense with animal food. Indeed, I believe the less animal food one uses, the better will it be. Much animal food, I think, induces many diseases, and, I do think it makes people ferocious and savage in their dispositions. I have lived for months at a time without tasting animal food, upon the above fare, and hardly ever knew what it was to be fatigued, or feel a pain or ache of either stomach or head or any part of my body ; and working hard, too, often with a spade or scythe. I do not pretend, however, to say that such fare would do in every climate of the world ; I speak only of Scotland where the climate exhausts the human system as little or even perhaps less, than in any part of the world. In this respect, Nature has been kind to her, as if to make up her lack of fertile fields and bright skies.

As a class, Scotch gardeners are very friendly with and kind to one another. Indeed, I have heard them spoken of as being too clannish. They regard themselves as a brotherhood, having regular lodges, something after the fashion of freemasons, for mutual aid and instruction, to which most of them belong ; having ways of recognizing one another known only to themselves. St. David's Lodge of Free Gardeners, in Edinburgh, is the principal one of these and has a regular charter, with branch lodges in different parts of the country. A great many men who are not operative gardeners, but merely friends of gardeners and lovers of the profession, are initiated into the mysteries of the brotherhood, which I believe is not confined to Scotland alone, something of the kind being found on the continent of Europe. The order is very ancient, but from what I learn appears to be losing ground, although in itself it is entirely of an innocent and harmless nature. Looking merely or primarily to the moral and professional good of its members and relieving their wants in times of sickness or adversity. In the cities and towns of Scotland on gala days, no procession of tradesmen or artizans make a better display than the gardeners, with their blue aprons, profusion of flowers and other insignia. The blue apron, one of which every brother is expected at least to possess, if he does not always wear it at his work, which many do,

is the proper badge of brotherhood, and to wear which, without being initiated is considered improper and by some even illegal. Such can be easily detected by the way they wear, tuck up, and put off or on their apron. A blue coat with brass buttons used to be the favorite one with gardeners. These customs and usages I suppose are fast becoming only the things of the past. Indeed, in themselves I never felt inclined to make much account of them farther than as a means of keeping people in good humor, which is something.

Many a happy day have I spent in a gardener's bothy. Many endearing friendships have I formed with my fellow inmates. Many good and eminent men have graduated from them,—not the least of whom was the late Sir Joseph Paxton, the designer of the Crystal Palace in London. In the bothy at Whittingham there were five of us; foreman, three journeymen and an apprentice. There were also six day-laborers employed in the gardens and pleasure grounds; mostly oldish men, decent and intelligent, natives and residents of the neighborhood. In the *Gardeners' Monthly*, published in Philadelphia, in the May number of 1866, page 130, is an article I wrote on gardening, and the following poem:—

THE SCOTTISH GARDENER'S SONG.

BY WILLIAM NISBET.—1866.

TUNE—*Auld Lang Syne.*

The lang cauld days hae come again,
 The ruefu' days o' March,
 Wi' sleet an' snaw an' frost an' rain,
 An' winds that keenly search.

At times, it tries a body sair,
 Toiling the lang dreigh hours
 At outside wark, to earn ane's fare;
 Exerting a' his powers.

Delving aft times, wi' aching back;
 The bushes an' the trees,
 Their limbs to prune, or stems to hack;
 Wi' fingers like to freeze.

But wi' it a' I like it weel,
 Auld Adam's heartsome trade;
 Cheerfu' an' strang it makes me feel;
 An' aye, ensures my bread.

Midst a' the elemental strife,
 Peace reigns within the mind;
 Syne, spring comes, aye, wi' joyfu' life;
 An' sun an' clouds prove kind.

The weaver snug, sits at his loom,
 An' tailor on his board—
 But health demands mair scope an' room,
 Her blessings to afford.

The learned clerk an' merchant great,
 Wi' fame an' riches rare,
 I envy na their in-door fate,
 Unblest wi' cauler air.

O, Nature's works! O, Nature's ways!
 Hae mony chairms for me;
 I wadna pairt wi' what she pays,
 For a' the world can gie.

There's beauty fair in ilka scene,
 Music in ilka soun';
 Let fields be bare, or clad in green,
 Still, Nature smiles aroun'!

It's gude to be whar' birdies sing,
 An' breezes freely blaw;
 Whar' verdure waves, an' flowers spring;
 An' trace God's han' in a'.

There's inspiration in the blast,
 That leafless sweeps the tree;
 An' bends the tall top-gallant mast,
 An' stirs the mighty sea.

To him o' meditative mood,
 Wha ponders weel God's plan;
 His dealings a' seem wise an' gude,
 An' fraucht wi' luv to man!

At Martinmas, the usual term in Scotland when gardeners and others leave or go to situations, November 11, 1837, I bade a reluctant adieu to Whittingham, and traveled home on foot to see my mother and friends in Kirkcudbright, a distance of 130 miles by the course I took, which was through the counties of Haddington, Berwick, Roxburgh, Selkirk and Dumfries. I traveled at my leisure, and found it a most interesting and delightful journey.

I shall never forget the wild, bleak scenery of the Lammermoor Hills, or rather mountains ; the romantic and truly enchanting scenery of St. Mary's Loch, and the loch of the Lowes, the Tweed, the Galla, the Ettrick, and the Yarrow, fair streams renowned in many a song and story. I was affectionately welcomed by my mother and all my relatives, friends and acquaintances. I had left them three years previous, a raw-boned, beardless youth. Now I stood before them "a strapping chiel of five feet eleven." So changed, they hardly knew me ; and, blessed be God ! my heart and conduct were still more changed, which gave much joy to many Christian friends. Indeed, the chief object of my visit was to testify of the goodness of God to me, in this respect. I eagerly sought out and attended the various prayer and fellowship meetings, held in the neighborhood, and took part in the exercises. I united with the Secession church in Kirkcudbright, of which Mr. Wood was, and I believe is still (1868), pastor ; a man of much piety, labor and self denial. During the three months I remained in this quarter, I had charge of Colonel, afterwards General, Irving's gardens, at Balmae, a pretty little place on the shores of the Solway Firth, some five miles south of the town. I spent a very happy winter here and a profitable one, too, as to spiritual matters. I thought nothing of walking to Kirkcudbright and back again in an evening to attend the happy religious meetings of the Young Men's Christian Society, of which I was admitted a member. I esteemed it a special favor from God, to be permitted to re-visit my native place, and have my name enrolled as a member of that society, which for a great many years has been the means of accomplishing so much good in that place, and there add my testimony as a Christian to the unspeakable value and impor-

tance of the religion of Christ Jesus. I am grateful to this day that I was thus enabled personally to testify in the place of my birth, the place above all others having the first and best claim upon me in this thing.

I have many pleasant and cherished memories of the members of this society, most of whom I had known from childhood. Some of them have long ago gone home to the Saviour, others are scattered here and there over the world, several of whom are faithful ministers of Jesus Christ. I remember one young man, a meek, loving disciple of Jesus, my friend and companion, John Douglas, a carpenter, who died in early youth, just after he had completed his apprenticeship, and was beginning to support his aged parents. I think oftentimes of the last words he spoke on earth. In the evening of the night on which he died, his mother went to his bedside to enquire how he was, and express her hope that he would have a good night's rest. He answered, "Mother, this night I sleep in Jesus!" In sad contrast with these words, I have often thought of the last words of another youth, who died about the same time in Edinburgh. He was a young man of great natural ability, and many amiable qualities, which procured him many friends, but he fell into bad company and took up with a class of young men of avowed infidel principles. He eagerly imbibed the deadly poison and eventually became a leader and oracle of an infidel club, whose aim was to confirm one another in, and disseminate their soul-destroying errors. At length he was laid upon a sick bed. He was visited by Christian ministers and people who sought to convince him of his sins and errors, but it was all in vain. He strenuously refused all counsel and stoutly maintained his own opinions. The night he died, the aged woman with whom he had boarded for some time, and who had acted a mother's part towards him, heard him moaning most piteously and calling, "mother! mother!" She went to his bedside and enquired, "What's the matter Henry, my son?" He answered, "I'm afraid! I'm afraid!" "Of what are you afraid?" she anxiously enquired. "Of God! of God!" he answered, and expired!

Fain would I have tarried longer midst the friends and

scenes of youth, but my engagement at Balmae was merely temporary, and as I could find no suitable employment in the neighborhood, I concluded to go to England to look for employment. So I again bade old Kirkcudbright another, a long, and I sometimes fear a last, farewell. I sailed for Liverpool, and traveled about a great deal over the country in quest of employment, but could find nothing desirable. I worked for a short time in an inferior capacity at Theobald's Park, in Herefordshire. I was considered too young and inexperienced to take a head-gardener's or even foreman's situation. And in England I found there was no distinct class of gardeners such as the journeymen in Scotland. Gardens almost universally being managed and carried on, at least at that time, by a head-gardener, a foreman and the common day-laborers of the vicinity, among whom, as at Theobald's Park, I found I would have to rank, at least for some time. The laborers and working people of England, I found were far behind the same class in Scotland, as to education and intelligence; a great proportion of them being unable to read or write, a case of which I never knew in the lowlands of Scotland, nor in the highlands either, except in the case of a few aged people, who had been brought up in the Hebrides, or other out-of-the-way districts. I had no cause to find fault with England or its people. I was occasionally bantered and twitted a little about my broad dialect and nationality, but that being always done in good humor I received it in the same spirit. There is one element of the English character I have always admired; as a people they are very downright and straightforward in both their speech and dealings, and great advocates for fair play. The very poorest of them display a neatness, cleanliness and tidiness in their person and household matters very creditable and pleasing.

Among other places I visited London. To a certain extent I may say, I traveled all through and around this wonderful city, the metropolis of the world. Its size and extent is enormous and perfectly bewildering to a stranger. I started one morning and walked through it from suburb to suburb, in as straight a line as I possibly could, and although I never rested but once for a few moments to eat something and spent very

little time in viewing objects, generally walking briskly all the time, being on my way to an expected situation, yet it took me nine hours to accomplish the journey. I was astonished at the cleanliness of the streets and the order and regularity every where manifest. I saw most of the great sights,—the palaces, Westminster Abbey, the Tower, the Coliseum, the wonderful docks and the adjoining storage cellars for wine and other merchandise, which run far under the busy streets, and other famed objects and places. But withal I felt lonely and homeless and discouraged at my lack of success. I had very little money and few friends, and London is the last place on earth to be without employment, money or friends.

The country in that part of England, and, indeed, almost every where else within its borders, although highly cultivated, rich and beautiful in the extreme, and perfectly garden-like, yet its scenery to me seemed oppressively monotonous and tiresome. There was an indescribable want or blank about it. Perhaps it was wrong to feel so, but I could not well help it. It was inborn in my nature and fostered by all my previous circumstances and associations. I thought of my native land. I sighed for her blue mountains, her heathery hills and peaceful glens and her kind, true-hearted people. I felt to say, —

“England thy beauties are tame and domestic,
To him who has roamed on the mountains afar;
O, for the crags that are grand and majestic —
The steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar!”

I knew were I only to return to Scotland again, especially to Edinburgh, I would be almost sure to find employment. I had just enough money left to procure a steerage passage to Leith, the port of Edinburgh, where in due time I arrived penniless, weary, and worn with care and fatigue. I went straight to the nurseries of my former employers, the Messrs. Dickson & Co., in Leith Walk. Just as I entered the gate, I met Mr. Shanklie, the manager, who was always a good friend to me, and who was also an old friend and fellow-workman with my father in his early days. He very kindly enquired

of my welfare, where I had been, and what I was engaged in, and without waiting for me to ask it, he offered me immediate employment, assigning me to the hothouse department, where I had been formerly employed under the experienced florist, Mr. James Ferguson, who was very glad to receive me back again, being at the time in need of one who knew the names and treatment of the plants, as he was suffering from an affection of the eyes which prevented him from attending to his work as usual. Here I remained several months. My religious privileges were very great during that time, in being privileged to hear so many able preachers of the gospel, and mingling with so many good and intelligent people. At this time I was very much bent upon becoming a missionary to the heathen. I made some enquiries about the matter, and found I would have to go for some years to a theological institution, which was out of the question in my case, as I could see no way of being supported during that time. Finally I came to the rational conclusion that I was neither entirely fit nor worthy of such a high calling, but the idea was uppermost in my mind for a long time. I was the more stimulated in this from the fact that an acquaintance of mine, who lately had worked in the nursery and lived in the bothy, was being educated for the work; some wealthy Christian people meanwhile supporting him. His name was William Murphy, a very pious and talented youth. Subsequently he went abroad and became, I have learned, a successful and devoted missionary to the heathen. But I lost track of him in a few years after leaving Edinburgh. At this time I was a member of Dr. John Brown's church, a grandson of the celebrated divine, John Brown, of Haddington, and himself a most excellent man, preacher and commentator. I remember many of the words he spoke to this day. I was also much interested in, and edified by, the preaching of that excellent man, James Haldane, familiarly called Captain Haldane. His praise, together with that of his brother Robert, "is in all the churches." I believe I did not hear that good and remarkable man, Dr. Chalmers, preach at this time, but I had that privilege during my first residence in Edinburgh, but, at that time, I was out of Christ.

While employed in the nursery at this time, I lived in the bothy. In 1835 I lodged in Shrub Place, near by. There were four of us in the bothy, being all more or less connected with the hothouses. We had family worship every evening, which had a good effect upon ourselves and some of our fellow-workmen, of whom there were some forty or more during the busy season, all bred gardeners. The wages at that time were very small: for transient hands only nine shillings per week. Most of the men were merely working in the nursery with the view and expectation of soon getting situations through their being there,—the proprietors being applied to for gardeners from all parts of the British isles, as well as occasionally from foreign countries. It was thus a kind of rendezvous and intelligence office for gardeners out of situations, they in the mean time being expected to work for small wages. The foreman and stationary hands were of course much better paid. Here were to be found many very intelligent and capable men, some of whom had seen much of the world. It was a good school for a young gardener to be in for a time. In fact, throughout Scotland, those who had worked in this, or any other of the many fine nurseries and public gardens in Edinburgh, used to be called “college-bred gardeners.”

Induced by an offer of better wages, and expectations of being enabled to obtain the means of further improvement in my business, I left Edinburgh at the following Martinmas, November 11, 1838, and went as journeyman to Buchannan House, the seat of the Duke of Montrose, near Loch Lomond, in Stirlingshire, a very picturesque, wild and romantic district on the verge of the western highlands of Scotland. My situation here was not a very desirable one either as to work, good treatment, or outward comfort. The head-gardener, although not without some good qualities, was a proud, high-minded man for his station in life; irascible, and at times very unreasonable and exacting—at least, I found him so. He had a great dislike to dissenters, and especially to those of the Secession church, which I had some reason to know by his demeanor towards me. At length my patience, together with that of other two of his men gave out, and we all left to-

gether ; the only place and only employer I ever left in what might be called bad humor. I now heartily forgive him—the poor man was old and had, I believe, some family anxieties. I had no fault, whatever, with either the locality or its people, who seemed kind, intelligent and well behaved.

My minister, Mr. Blair, of the Secession church in Drymen, was a very excellent man and minister of Christ. I shall never forget his kindness, and that of his whole family to me. His wife, I found, was a relative of Sir Samuel Douglas, of Castle Douglas in Kirkcudbrightshire.

I recollect spending a very pleasant day while in this place, in sailing on the loch, being sent one lovely May morning to meet and help bring up the loch and river Enrick, a “gabbard” laden with coal for the supply of the hothouses. During the time she was waiting for a fair wind we took the small boat and rowed about among, and landed on, some of the many picturesque islands in which the loch abounds. It is the largest fresh-water lake in the British islands, being about twenty-four miles long and nine broad. The shores are indented with many sinuosities and estuaries of streams, of which the Enrick is the largest. It is almost everywhere surrounded by lofty mountains, the chief of which is Ben Lomond, “mount of the sun, or light of day.” The wild woods, the islands, the rugged, overhanging cliffs, the frowning precipices, the rapid-rushing streams and white-foaming cataracts that bespangle the steep mountain sides, as onward they sweep and leap to meet and mingle with the deep and dark waters of the lake,—all these together make the scenery of Loch Lomond one of stupendous and awful grandeur.

My residence at Buchannan, although thus seemingly unpropitious, was the means of the conversion to God of two of my fellow-workmen, who, I have reason to believe, have continued ever since to hold fast “the faith and the beginning of their confidence towards God.” One of them now holds a highly respectable and very prominent position in life ; the other, I have not heard of for several years. If alive, I have no doubt he is still what he was, a useful and consistent Christian. He strove hard by diligent, personal study to fit himself for the regular ministry, but having no means of his own to support himself meanwhile, I believe he never entered it for lack of a

finished education. I have still in my possession, letters from these friends, which I highly prize, in which I am the acknowledged instrument under God, of their conversion. While here, I was also the means, according to his own declaration, of reclaiming another fellow-workman from infidelity. He had several infidel books, which he then destroyed. I lost sight of this young man soon afterwards. He then talked about joining the church. I have often desired to know his subsequent history. I trust I have been the means of turning some persons to God in other places besides this one, but I was led to remark the above cases so much the more, as during my residence there I was sometimes tempted to enquire, "Wherefore am I here?" I had often heard of Buchannan. My father in his youth worked in the gardens there, as well as in the Messrs. Dickson's nurseries and other good places. My brother John, too, visited it in a pedestrian journey he made through portions of Scotland and Ireland. It was then a splendid place, indeed; the gardens and hothouses were very extensive and good. I was sorry to leave it at the time, and in the way I did, but I think I had good reasons for doing so, and I have never, as yet, blamed myself for it.

After leaving the above place, I traveled around the country for about ten days in quest of work, which I then obtained in the gardens of James Ewing, Esq., of Levenside, formerly member of Parliament for Glasgow, in the beautiful vale of Leven in Dumbartonshire, about two miles from the ancient town and castle of Dumbarton. This was a change greatly for the better. Mr. Ewing was laying out a fine new garden, which afforded me a good opportunity for improvement. I remained here six months, during which time I was a member of the Secession church in Dumbarton, of which Mr. Andrew, now, I believe, Dr. Andrew Somerville, was pastor; a very learned and faithful minister of Christ. I look back with much pleasure to my sojourn here. I loved to stray by the banks of the crystal Leven, and, like the poet Smollett, who has immortalized the fair stream in his beautiful "Ode to Leven Water," I used to bathe my limbs in its pure waters. The river, or water, as it is called, forms the outlet of Loch Lomond, by which its surplus waters find their way through the firth of Clyde to the ocean.

The name Leven, from El Avon, in the ancient language of the country, means the sun or sacred river. The ancient inhabitants before their conversion to Christianity, like the Canaanites and Phenicians of old, were worshippers of Bel, Bal or Baäl, the god of fire. Like them they worshipped the "host of heaven;" the sun, moon and stars; especially the sun, as the representative of the deity in dispensing light, heat, fertility and life. Many rivers, mountains, glens and other objects and places appear from the names they still possess to have been dedicated to the worship of Bel, the sun, moon and stars. Hence the frequency of the prefix Bel or Bal to the names of so many places in Scotland. On many mountains there are heaps of stones called Bel's cairns, where it is believed these ancient fire-worshippers kindled their sacrificial fires. Thus we have the word "Bothwell" from Both-el or Both-bel—the house or temple of Bel, or the deity. How similar this is to the Hebrew Bethel, "house of God." Indeed, in the names of some places the word "beth" does occur, as in Carbeth; there is also a Beith and a Newbeath. The Scottish word "bothie," or small house, comes from this word, and doubtless the English word "booth." My own name being a local name or name of a place in Scotland, I fancy is derived from or composed of two ancient Celtic words,—*"Nish,"* from whence Ness, a point or promontory, and *"beth,"* a house. Anciently the name had a terminal *"h,"* as in Macbeth. I have derived much pleasure and recreation of mind from studying somewhat into such seemingly trivial things as names of places and persons and their meaning and derivation.

While living at Levenside, I learned that my brother Douglas had gone off to Charleston, South Carolina, as a clerk or book-keeper. I felt very sorry I did not see him before he left, and regretted much that he had gone to live in a hot climate and in a land where human beings were held in bondage and slavery. Although a number of years my junior and of a more feeble frame than I, yet he had mingled a good deal in my boyish plays and rambles. I was always much attached to him, he being always of a very kind and peaceable disposition. I feared at that time I should never see him more, but I have had that pleasure several times since then.

1839-1842.

HAVING an offer of a better situation, as flower gardener in the gardens of Colonel Harvey, at Castle Semple, in Renfrewshire, I left Levenside and went to that place at Martinmas, November 11, 1839. Castle Semple is a beautiful place, finely situated on the shores of a picturesque loch, or lake, some two miles in length and half a mile or so in breadth. The mansion-house is about a mile and a half from the thriving village of Loch Winnoch, so named from the adjoining loch. The gardens were at this time among the finest in Scotland. I had charge of the fine and large flower-garden and the extensive plant-houses connected with it. The owner and his family were excellent people. Mr. Hardie, the head-gardener was a fine old man of religious principles. The foreman in the hothouse department, Mr. John Chapman, was a very capable, aimiable and religious young man. About a year after I went to Castle Semple he went to the Earl of Lauderdale's gardens in Berwickshire, as foreman. He and I continued firm friends and constant correspondents. Some time after coming to America I wondered why he had ceased to write to me. At length I received a very touching letter from his sister giving a most affecting account of his sickness and death. His memory is still very pleasant and dear to me as of a friend "not lost but gone before." Mr. Richmond, the forester on the estate, and his family, showed me much kindness. He was an old friend of my father's; a school-fellow and fellow-workman in early life. The family emigrated to Montreal, Canada, where he died soon after landing. His son-in-law, Mr. James Middleton, has ever since continued a good friend and correspondent of mine. The inhabitants of this part of Scotland are noted for their intelligence, education and good conduct. This applies in a special manner to the people of Paisley, a large and celebrated manufacturing town in the vicinity. Shortly

after I went to this place I became a member, by baptism, of the Scotch Baptist Church, in the neighboring village of Kilbarchan, of which, Mr. James McGavin and Mr. David Baldneive were elders. Mr. Baldneive was a Christian of rare excellence of character and abilities. I shall never forget the kindness I received from the members of this church, as well as of the sister-churches in Paisley, Glasgow, Dumbarton and elsewhere in the west of Scotland. Never, yet, have I met anything to exceed it. My humble station in life was no barrier to my being entertained as an occasional guest in the families of refined and wealthy merchants and manufacturers. Nowhere have I ever seen such a true Christian spirit in word and deed than what I saw manifested among the members of these churches. They were friends and disciples of Jesus, indeed ; sound in faith, deeds and doctrine. May God bless every one of them who are still in the flesh ! In Scotland there are two classes of Baptists, who differ chiefly in some points of church order. The party called English Baptists, agree with those in England. The other party, being at one time the only class of Baptists in Scotland, are therefore called Scotch or original Baptists. The chief peculiarities of the Scotch Baptists are these : they observe the Lord's supper every first day of the week ; they believe in a plurality of elders or pastors, as well as of deacons, in each individual church, as being required of scripture, and essential to its complete order and efficiency. Their pastors, like the deacons, are generally chosen out from among themselves. The mutual prayers, exhortations and teachings of the brethren are allowed a prominent place in the full assemblies of the church when met for worship. Their pastors and preachers of all kinds, are of the class commonly termed lay preachers. Not considering a collegiate education essentially necessary to preaching the gospel or filling the pastoral office. At the same time, they do not by any means, under-rate the value and importance of education and learning. Nor do they deny the right of those "who labor in the word and doctrine," to be fairly remunerated whenever necessary. Nor in the formation of a new church, do they consider it necessary to have a plurality of elders at the very first ; believing, however, that a

church is not in full or New Testament order without a plurality ; which, they say, was the case with the first churches, as planted and set in order by the apostles, of whom it is said, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church" (Acts xiv. 23). Such also being the case with the churches in Phillipi and Ephesus, who are expressly spoken of as having a plurality of bishops or elders. (Phil. i. 1., Acts xx. 17.)

I got a good deal into notice at this time from frequently speaking in the assemblies of the church in Kilbarchan, and other churches of like faith and order in that part of the country, as well as from preaching the gospel in different places around, in which I had the hearty approval of my brethren. I spoke occasionally, also, at public meetings in favor of the temperance cause. It was while I lived at Castle Semple I became acquainted with Catherine Angus, my wife, who was also a member of the said church. About this time, summer of 1840, my mother and sisters left Kirkcudbright and came to live in the city of Glasgow, about fifteen miles distant, so that I had frequent opportunities of seeing them. My time passed away very pleasantly. My duties were comparatively light, and I had many friends and good opportunities for mental improvement. The surrounding country was highly picturesque and full of interesting historical associations. Wherever it has been my lot to sojourn, the configuration, the aspect and scenery of the country has always had much to do with the pleasure and happiness of my life. A level country, however fertile and well cultivated, has a tendency to make me somehow dissatisfied and even somewhat low spirited. Whereas, when the country is hilly and mountainous, however barren it may be, and especially if well wooded and near the sea, I could feel comparatively happy, even although my own circumstances were adverse. Although satisfied to have remained longer, if necessary, at Castle Semple, yet, having an offer of higher wages from John Henderson, Esq., of Park, at his country seat of that name, on the banks of the Clyde, near Paisley, I accepted it, having completed my second year's engagement at Castle Semple. I only remained a few months at the Park, as I was disappointed with the place. The garden I found to be a poor one, which

being left mainly to my care, I felt I could never do well by it, either in gaining credit for myself or affording pleasure or profit to the owner, who was a very fine Christian gentleman. His head-gardener, Mr. Sleight, was a good Christian also. His time was chiefly occupied in superintending the farming department of the estate.

About this time, my future brother-in-law, Mr. James Angus, left Scotland for America. I accompanied him as far as Liverpool and saw him sail for New York. In sailing up the Mersey to that port, the fourth time I had done so, I was much affected at sight of the locality where my poor brother Walter was drowned. His body never was found. In Liverpool, I had the pleasure of spending a few days with my sisters Isabella and Jane, who were here earning their living as dressmakers. I had not seen either of them for several years, and the occasion was a pleasant one for us all. After visiting a few friends and some of the gardens in that locality, I returned to Scotland and remained a short time with my mother, in Glasgow.

1842-1846.

I HAD often thought of emigrating to the United States, having heard and read many favorable accounts of the great privileges and advantages of the country—"Chamber's Information for the people," was the work, the reading of which was the principle cause of my taking this course, the editor having a very able article in it on the advantages of emigration. After duly consulting with my intended partner in life, and my relatives and friends, I concluded to take this step.

We were married in Glasgow, March 7, 1842, by Mr. Archibald Watson, one of the elders or pastors of the Portland, now John-Street Baptist Church, in that city. On the 14th of the same month we sailed in the brig *Stillman*, of 250 tons, from Glasgow for New York, where we arrived, after a long and boisterous passage, on the eleventh of May. The vessel was small, overcrowded with passengers and poorly manned. We had a time of much peril and hardship. Having been at sea before, I was of no small use on board. I worked pretty much as one of the seamen, which drove away the tedium incident to the life of a passenger on a lengthened voyage. My wife bore up with good courage and patience. Like myself, she was never seasick. There was much suffering among the passengers, many having brought a too limited supply of provisions. We were in the second cabin and fared a little better, in some respects, than the steerage passengers, our provisions being found us by the ship, which, however, were neither very good in quality nor sufficient in quantity. Our supply of water getting low, we were all put upon a very short allowance of it, for a time. It was sad to hear the poor children crying for water. I used to keep a bit of lead in my mouth, which I fancied in some measure alleviated the thirst.

At this time the law was very lax as to the fitting out and provisioning of emigrant ships. It was a good place to try human nature and to study it, and I think it was profitable to me. There were some very good, respectable people on board, with whom I could have wished to have kept up a friendly intercourse and correspondence, but as soon as we landed we were to be scattered all abroad, hardly any one being able to tell another where to direct a letter. With the exception of two or three, I never knew what became of them, which I have often regretted.

It was a great trial to leave our native land. No one can form any idea of it except from experience. The parting with my mother and sisters as well as with the parents and relatives of my wife was very affecting and trying. As the gallant ship with outspread sails swiftly bore us onward, we gazed wistfully on the receding shore, until the blue mountains of dear old Scotia faded from our view behind the heaving billows, and then, in sadness, we turned our eyes away! The following verses from that plaintive song, "The Emigrant's Farewell," by Pringle, came home to my heart with all their sad meaning and power :—

" Farewell ye hills of glorious deeds—
And streams renowned in song.
Farewell ye braes and blossomed meads
Our hearts have loved so long.
Home of our love! our father's home!
Land of the brave and free!

The sail is flapping on the foam,
That bears us far from thee!
Our native land, our native vale—
A long and last adieu!
Farewell to bonny Teviotdale,
And Scotland's mountains blue!"

Ah, who can conceive of the feelings of those who have expatriated themselves! Not really willingly—not by reason of any dislike to the land of their birth, but by stern necessity and force of adverse circumstances. The words which poor Falconer, the sailor-poet and author of the "Shipwreck," ap-

plied to his going off to sea, may, in some measure, be applied to many of such :—

“Forlorn of heart and by severe decree,
Condemned reluctant to the faithless sea !”

The command of the Lord to the Israelites of old was, “Not to vex and oppress the strangers that came among them, but to remember they themselves had been such in the land of Egypt,” and knew “the heart of a stranger.” This was indeed and still remains a most wise, beneficent and needful command,—“the heart of a stranger.” Well I know what that is. How often have I felt its sadness, its loneliness and dreary forebodings ! I trust I do, and ever shall feel for all such. I am supremely thankful and grateful that ever I have known this. It has humbled me, taught me to trust in God and feel for others.

My wife is a native of the parish of New Kilpatrick, so named after St. Patrick, who was born, it is said, in this part of Scotland. It is in the county of Dumbarton, about six miles from Glasgow. Her parents are John Angus and Janet Gibson, who bear excellent Christian characters. Her father and grandfather have had the charge of locks on the Forth and Clyde canal, from their youth. Her parents and grandparents have all belonged to the Scotch Baptist denomination in Glasgow.

Soon after arriving in New York, I found employment at the country seat of James Lennox, Esq., of that city, at Netherwood, near New Hamburg, Dutchess County, N. Y., where I immediately proceeded, leaving my wife for a fortnight at the house of my cousin, Mr. David Sang, market-gardener, near Bloomingdale. Poor fellow ; he died in a few months afterwards of typhus fever, and his family returned to Scotland, from which they had only been absent two years, and having expended all their money in endeavoring to find a home in the new world. He was a son of Mr. Edward Sang, the well-known nurseryman and horticultural writer, of Kirkcaldy. After making some arrangements about a tenement and other matters, I returned to New York for my wife. We bought a few necessary articles of furniture and provisions,

which quite exhausted our little pecuniary store, and took up house at Netherwood, June 3, 1842.

At first we felt every thing in this country new and strange. We thought much of our native land and the many kind friends we had left there, and at times felt homesick. But, upon the whole, we felt satisfied that we had come to America, and soon began to get along very well and feel happy and contented. We had a fine view from where we lived of the Hudson River, the Catskill Mountains, the Highlands, and the villages of New Hamburg and Newburg, while the general aspect of the country was pleasant and picturesque. With the exception of our nearest neighbors, Mr. James Geddes, a worthy Scotchman, and his wife, and one or two other families, we had few associates. Our religious privileges were not at all good. My wages were very small — twenty-one dollars per month and a tenement free of rent, and my work, which was a mixture of garden, farm and common work, very different from what I had been used to.

James, our first child, was born here, February 13, 1843. We left Netherwood on the first of April, 1844, and went to live at Yorkville, New York City, where I was employed in the nursery of the Messrs. Hogg for the next five months. I only went there to be on hand until a suitable situation could be obtained. While here, we had fellowship with the Scotch Baptist Church, in New York, of which my very worthy employer, Mr. Thomas Hogg, Senr., was an elder. We never liked living here very well, the locality was so noisy, and at that time very subject to the fever and ague.

One day, Capt. B. W. Comstock, of Providence, R. I., came to the nursery to enquire for a person to take charge of his gardens and farm. Upon Mr. Hogg's recommendation he at once hired me, and we proceeded straightway to Providence, where we arrived August 21, 1844.

For several weeks we lived at India Point, in the city, and then moved to the farm in Seekonk, now East Providence, adjoining that of the late Hon. Tristram Burges. I had also the charge of the captain's gardens and hothouses in the city.

The very first appearance of New England and its people was highly pleasing and prepossessing. With the city of Providence and its inhabitants, we were both pleased and surprised ; there seemed so much of cleanliness, good order, civility and industry. Somehow, we felt we had found a home and a place of rest on earth ; nor have our ideas in these respects ever changed. My heartfelt sympathies and prayers are for good New England.

While at Seekonk I was gladdened by a visit from my brother Douglas, of Charleston, S. C. We had not seen one another for some eight years. He would very willingly have remained in New England, but failing to find suitable employment he went back again to Charleston. I have had the pleasure of seeing him several times since then.

1846-1858.

MY EMPLOYER'S affairs becoming somewhat involved, we left Seekonk, April 1, 1846, and went to live at Elm Grove, city of Providence, on the beautiful farm of the late lamented Mrs. Anna Jenkins, and formerly the residence of her grandfather, the venerable and worthy Moses Brown.

At Elm Grove I laid out a fine new garden with hothouses connected with it, of which I had the charge for twelve years, together with the grounds around the family mansion on Benefit Street, as well as those of Dr. Samuel B. Tobey, agent and director for the Jenkins family. Here we had a good home, good employers, and many kind friends. Our cottage was near a wild wood, with a romantic glen and brook near by, and within a few minutes' walk of the salt water at the head of the Narragansett Bay. A half-hour's walk took us into the heart of the city. Thus, we had all the advantages of a town and country residence. Our cottage was self-contained and stood all alone. My liberal employers allowed me to plan it, and select its site, as if it had been my own. It was a lovely spot ; the birds sang all day in the boughs of the overshadowing trees that grew all around, and our children, who were all born here with the exception of the two oldest, James having been born at Netherwood, and John at Seekonk, played about as free and as unmolested as if the place was our own. Their educational advantages here were very good, as well as our religious privileges. With the exception of my native St. Mary's Isle, I never yet have loved or felt so much attachment to any one place as Elm Grove.

In December, 1848, a few individuals, of whom were my wife and I, of the same faith and order as the Scotch Baptist, formed into order as a church of Christ, in Providence. In

this capacity we were duly recognized by the church in New York, as well as aided by the counsel and presence of one of its elders, Mr. Hogg, who came to Providence for that purpose. I was chosen leader or presiding brother of the little band. In August, 1850, I was ordained elder ; which office I held until I went to Canada, in the spring of 1858. This step of the church was also recognized by the church in New York. We never increased much in numbers, there never being over twenty belonging to the body altogether, although for the number of membership we had quite a little company of hearers in our meetings. At times, we had our troubles within and without. We had to "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints;" and had to bear the cross as all have to "who will live godly in Christ Jesus." But we were enabled "to build ourselves up in the most holy faith, and keep ourselves in the love of God," and had reason to believe we were the means of salvation and edification to some persons at least. Many happy hours and blessed means of grace did our little gatherings prove to me. Our peculiar views of church order never were acceptable to any extent among those who had not been previously acquainted with such churches. Our principles altogether were so near akin to those of other Baptists, that many seemingly judicious persons told us there was no cause for our organization.

We were at least sincere in our views of such things, and certainly had no other end in view than the glory of God; and "we did what we could." Shortly after I left Providence for Canada, several others also having left for various other places, and one of our dear brethren, Mr. William McLeod, having died, a most excellent and gifted young Christian, the few who were left, deemed it best to discontinue the meetings and join other churches. The records of the church which I wrote out, I left with my worthy friend Mr. Daniel Barr, who had been ordained co-elder with me, a little before I left Providence. Mr. George Anderson, one of the brethren, brother-in-law to my wife, is in Canada, where he labors as a preacher of the gospel ; with him, as well as with Mr. James McCulloch, Mr. Joseph Beynon, Mr. Alexander Forsyth, and

others, who at one time were all connected with the church, I am still enabled to keep up a friendly intercourse.

I wrote two small pamphlets, a number of years ago, advocating "primitive principles," and giving an account of the Scotch Baptists. These my brethren had printed.

Soon after I came to Providence, the Rhode Island Horticultural Society was formed, of which, in consideration of my being a practical gardener, I was constituted a member without paying any fee.

My employer, Capt. B. W. Comstock, who was quite an enthusiast in all such matters, was the first president of the society. In the summer of 1845, while I was in his employ, Capt. Comstock, with Stephen H. Smith, Esq., John J. Stimpson, Esq., and some other gentlemen, got up an exhibition of fruits and flowers, which was held in the Captain's house on Hope Street, to which all who had an interest in horticulture were invited. I helped to arrange the articles, the dining and drawing rooms being filled with tables on which the articles were displayed. This may be considered the starting-place of the society, which was formed shortly after this exhibition ; the next one being held in a public hall. For several years after the commencement of the society, being one of the few practical gardeners in the neighborhood, being also the youngest and more recently from Europe, a good deal was expected of me by the society, and my advice was frequently asked by the owners of gardens and amateur horticulturists around Providence. I was very glad of any opportunity to be useful in promoting the interest and disseminating the knowledge of this profession and science. I think I strived all I could to do so.

I endeavored to teach a number of young men who worked with me in the gardens at Elm Grove, from time to time, the rudiments of gardening and botany, with the view of their ultimately becoming good gardeners, which labor was not in vain, as some of them have since excelled in a high degree in this respect. In doing this, of course I neither sought nor received any fee or personal benefit whatever. My aim being the welfare of the young men and the interest of the profession, while I was amply repaid in the pleasure which it afforded

me at the time and has ever since. It is a true proverb : "in teaching we learn and in giving we receive."

When I came to Providence in 1844, the only gardeners in the city or State who had been brought up to, or understood the management of, hothouses, I believe, were Mr. Richard Dalglish, gardener to Madame Ives ; the late Mr. Lancelot Mitchell, and the late Mr. Peter Wood, jobbing-gardeners. Mr. Mitchell came to Providence with Mr. Robert Bowser, whom he instructed in the knowledge of the business. Mr. Mitchell had, then, a little greenhouse on Angell Street. He was a good gardener and a man whom every one liked for his obliging and peaceable disposition. He died of cholera in 1849. Mr. Wood was also a good gardener and naturally a fine sort of a man, but, unfortunately, was at times, rather intemperate. He set out for California about the time of Mr. Mitchell's death, and died on the passage, at sea. The above were all Scotchmen. The late Mr. John Hamilton was, at this time, gardener to Alexander Duncan, Esq. He was a good gardener, but I am not aware that he understood the management of hothouses.

There were some small private graperies, such as that of Captain Townsend's, on Brown Street, and one or two more ; but there was neither in the city nor State, hardly any thing that could be called a private greenhouse or plant-house. In Madame Ives' garden there was a small pit greenhouse, which was the only one in the city. There were several small greenhouses where plants and flowers were sold, which were : Mr. Dalglish's, on Power Street ; Mr. Bowser's, on Hope Street ; Mr. Mitchell's, on Angell Street ; and Mr. Potter's, in Cranston. There was nothing of the kind that I knew of anywhere else in the State. Tomatoes then were hardly known in the market, neither was celery or cauliflower. There were also comparatively few fine flowers in cultivation. I once grew and exhibited a few good cockscombs in the hall of the Horticultural Society. They were the first that had been seen, and made quite a sensation.

The first impulse given to horticulture in Rhode Island, and indeed throughout the country, was the publication and circulation of the works of the late lamented Andrew J.

Downing, Esq. The progress it has made of late years is quite astonishing. Soon after I came to Providence, I was frequently applied to, and asked to provide gardeners for various families. Among others whom I was the means of bringing from Scotland and different parts of this country, were Mr. William Sturgeon, now a Baptist minister in the West ; Mr. George Anderson, and Mr. Alexander Forsyth, both now in Canada. These were all employed in the gardens at St. Mary's Isle ; long, however, after I left it. They were good gardeners and very intelligent, and respectable young men. Mr. Anderson, in particular, gave many proofs of his skill in horticulture, while in Providence, as gardener to General James and George W. Chapin, Esq. He has also attained to a good degree as a preacher of Christ. He is one of the best educated gardeners I ever knew, having been educated at the celebrated "Dollar Institution," at Dollar, in Scotland, an excellent academy, free to all natives of that place.

The year 1849 was a time of trial to me and my family. The summer was very hot and sickly. Dysentery, scarlet fever, and Asiatic cholera prevailing extensively. In the month of August my wife and three of the children were taken sick with scarlet fever. Through the blessing and favor of God they all recovered in due time with the exception of Henry, a beautiful and intelligent boy of great promise. He was very large for his age, with fair complexion, and curly hair and large blue eyes.

After languishing and suffering extreme pain for nearly three weeks, he breathed his last on Sabbath-day, the ninth of September, aged three years and three days. At the time of his death, his mother, little brother John, and sister Jessie were very sick. A few minutes before he died he regained consciousness and made signs, for he could not speak, of his wish to be laid in bed beside his mother. She kissed him, stroked back his hair and said, "Henry, can you say your prayers?" which he seemed to delight to do in days of health, often reminding his mother, when putting him to bed, to hear him repeat his prayers ; when he would say, "say p'ayers, ma." The well-known words waked up all his dying energy. He opened, and then shut his sunken eyes, clasped his feeble

hands in the attitude of prayer, and muttering a few words, immediately "fell asleep." Saved like myriads of little ones through the merits of Him who declared "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

I felt deeply the loss of this dear child. One night, feeling deeply oppressed in spirit, I arose and wrote a few verses of poetry to his memory, which had the effect of assuaging my grief thenceforth. Often have I found much pleasure, solace and comfort in thus giving vent to my feelings in homely rhyme.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE HENRY.

BY WILLIAM NISBET.

From pain and sickness all set free,
Thy spirit's gone above,
Nor aught of thee I hear or see,
Son of my hope and love.

Oh ! fondly loved, departed child !
Thy mother's pride and joy ;
How oft my care thou hast beguiled,
My own sweet, artless boy !

And still I love to think and muse
On all you did and said,
I treasure all thy hands did use —
Thy watering-pot and spade !

The mimic tree thou used to plant
I love full well to see,
And every place thy feet did haunt —
Each spot is dear to me.

O'er bank, on sandy brae, in brook,
With brothers thou wouldst play ;
What pleasures there thou didst enjoy,
From dawn to setting day !

Or, watchful of thy mother's care,
With sister thou wouldst stand ;
Thy father's toil wouldst strive to share
With ready foot and hand.

Methinks I hear thine evening prayer —
 Thy mother by thy bed,
 With lisping tongue and serious air : —
 Now low thy form is laid.

Still, when by starlight forth I pace,
 I feel thy spirit near ;
 The thought my mind dare scarce efface,
 To wipe away my tear.

So fair, so pure, so happy now —
 Praised be the Saviour's love —
 I dare not wish thee back below
 From thy bright home above.

But, gladsome would the path pursue
 That leads the way to heaven ;
 There I shall meet again with you,
 Where no fond ties are riven.

On October 19, 1849, James, my eldest brother, died in Edinburgh. He was a good man in every sense of the word. He acted as a father to our family after my father's death. On the morning of November 20, 1849, my much respected employer and patron, Mrs. Anna Jenkins, and her amiable daughter, Miss Sarah, perished by the burning up of their dwelling-house. It was a sad event and a heart-rending scene. I was on the spot early in the morning, and helped to get the bodies out of the ruins. I can never forget that morning. Her death was a great loss and deprivation to many. It was especially so to me, in many respects. Mrs. Jenkins was a pious, humble-minded, kind-hearted, Christian lady, full of condescension. I remember well when she was about to depart for England the last time. She bade me farewell, shook hands with me, and said, "remember me in the right way," meaning in prayer.

In the end of September and beginning of October, 1856, I took an extensive tour through the Canadas and a portion of the States. I traveled by way of New York, Albany, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Hamilton, London, Woodstock, Huron County, Toronto, Barre, Nottawasaga, Cobourg, Port Hope, Kingston, Prescott, Kemptville, Ogdensburg, Montreal, Vermont, New

Hampshire, the White Mountains, Maine, Portland to Boston. This was quite an era in my life, full of interest, information and enjoyment. I had traveled much before, but never upon a lengthened pleasure tour. This was after the completion of the new mansion-house, erected on the site of the one destroyed by fire, now occupied by Thomas F. Hoppin, Esq., who married Mrs. Jenkins' daughter Anna. I had just finished the laying out of the grounds around it,—on the corner of Benefit and John Streets,—which gave great satisfaction to my employers. Their manager, Dr. Tobey, very kindly afforded me the time and a portion of the expense necessary to make the journey, which did not cost over sixty dollars altogether, as I traveled as economically as I possibly could, not feeling able to lay out much money upon such an unessential undertaking; the journey being taken solely with the desire of seeing the country and a few friends living in different places. I extract the following from a kind of journal I wrote of the journey, the greater portion of which is now lost: "In the evening, at New York, I took passage on board the *Isaac Newton*, for Albany, the most splendid vessel I have ever seen. The furniture and fitting up of every thing on board was tasteful and gorgeous in the extreme. The sail up the North River by moonlight, I shall never forget. I paid for a berth but never used it. I never shut my eyes that night, nor did I feel tired either then or during the next day, I was so enchanted with the lovely scenery all around. In passing the Highlands the scene was one of surpassing beauty. The river lit up by the pale bright beams of the lovely harvest-moon, seemed a stream of flowing silver. On each side were the lofty hills in all their strength and grandeur of rock and precipice, their bases and more gently sloping sides beautifully covered with wild woods; and over all, the moon, like a queen, presided in her loveliness and glory. Sweet scenes! they reminded me of the dear land of my birth. They carried my mind back to the days of my youth, when in admiration I gazed on her mountains, glens and lochs. Then I thought of Him who created all, and rules over all. Whose kingdom is everlasting and glorious. I thought, too, of that blest abode of beauty, peace and glory, that awaits all who love and obey

Him. I thought, if such rapt delight as then pervaded my soul could flow from seeing and contemplating his works in this sin-disordered world, what must it be to behold his face in glory who made them all, in that 'new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

"I visited Niagara, and upon getting a glimpse of the rapids and falls and hearing the thunderings of the mighty waters, I was filled with emotion. Speak, I could not. I could only gaze, wonder and adore. I descended the stairs to the river below the falls and was almost blinded by the spray and deafened by the ceaseless roar of the waters. I hurried down to the little steamer, the *Maid of the Mist*,—a befitting name,—which steams up within a few hundred feet of the falls and lands passengers on the Canadian shore. I went on board, but found the captain deemed it unsafe to venture into the stream for fear the current, together with the high wind which was then prevailing, might carry his little craft on the rocks below the falls, or hurry her onwards to the whirlpool. This was a great disappointment to me ; however, along with two other passengers, I got into a rowboat, which sometimes in such cases serves as a ferry-boat. So, dressed in water-proof cloaks, drenched and dripping from the flying spray, we crossed over to the Canada side. Leaving the boat I walked leisurely up the steep bank from the river, by a narrow, winding path, ever and anon turning around to behold the glorious scene. Although the wind blew high, there was an unclouded sky and a bright sun. I felt all aglow with enthusiasm and delight, but not satisfied, until I went to the adjoining hotel, got dressed in a suit of water-proof, and with a guide, I descended and stood for several minutes under the awful cataract itself. And then, what a scene ! What thoughts passed through my mind ! It was unspeakable, indiscribable, all sublime, all glorious ! Fear, I had none. I ascended the bank again and having divested myself of my water-proof garments, I went out to the extremity of a large log, laid there for the special behoof of the more venturesome visitors. I sat astride of it, within six feet of the edge, gazing into the yawning abyss ! Then I sat on the green grass by the edge of the water ; I drank of it ; I washed my face and

hands in it, again and again, and if I had been brought up an Idolater instead of a Christian, I verily believe I would have worshipped the awful and mysterious, the irresistible, overwhelming flood. I wished that every friend, every person I had ever known or spoken to—yea, I may say, the whole world—could have seen it and partaken of my wonder and delight. Doubtless I must be an enthusiast. After lingering an hour or two thus, all alone, I crossed over again to the American side, and, as the wind had gone down considerably, we crossed over more comfortably, getting a little wetting by the spray. In the middle of the river, I looked around and beheld on one side the Suspension Bridge, and on the other, the falls—perhaps the two greatest wonders the world then contained, one of nature the other of art. After landing I went up and surveyed the American falls. I crossed the bridge to Goat Island, and was shown the rock, where, on a stranded log, a fellow-man clung for twenty-four hours, in sight of agonized thousands who could afford him no relief. At last he was hurried over the dread abyss. Oh, what a position was that to occupy; and what an exit from this world! Alas! poor, frail man; how weak and feeble in his best estate. I had now seen all, at least all I had time to see. While on the Canadian side, I ascended the observatory and had a most perfect and commanding view of the whole scene. As the cars were about to start for Hamilton, I had to tear myself away from this truly fascinating and enchanting scene. Well, I have seen Niagara. One great dream and wish of my life has been realized. I thank God for it. Could I afford the time and the money, I would make a yearly pilgrimage to it, were it a thousand miles distant from my abode. I cannot undertake to describe its wonders; that is far beyond my powers. I can only in some faint degree describe my own feelings at sight of it.”

I paid a visit to my old school-fellow, Mr. William Payne, farmer, near Egmondville, Huron County, Canada. I extract the following account of my visit: “Mr. and Mrs. Payne, received me most kindly and have been unremitting in their attentions to me. It being too late, when I reached their house, to go to church, I sat and talked with them, read a lit-

tle, and then Mr. Payne and I took a walk into the forest. I was enchanted with the scene. The tall, glorious trees, planted by Nature's own hand, towering upwards, hiding sun and clouds, some of them fallen and mouldering away. How silent these dense, dark, primeval forests. No sound, even of a bird, to break the death-like stillness. My spirit felt subdued and awed. Mr. Payne showed me where they had shot two bears the week before. Wolves, he said, were still numerous. In the afternoon of the next day, we rode out among the settlers. I found they were mostly all from my native country; the greater proportion of them belonging to the neighborhood of Kirkcudbright, Gatehouse and Castle Douglas. I never met with such kindness as I did from them, it seemed as if they did not know what to do with me. Nearly all of them knew our family. They seemed desirous for me to settle among them. I had to drink tea in several different houses, as I was afraid they would feel hurt if I refused. Not one of them offered me strong drink. I was much pleased to see that in every instance before partaking of food they offered thanks to God. I was much pleased and interested in the names they had bestowed upon their farms; they were the well-known names of places around my native home; such as Balmae, Balig, Torrs and Balgreddan. These names alone awoke a host of pleasing memories. May God bless these kind, noble people. They have little indeed of what the world calls refinement of speech and manners, but they are Nature's own noblemen. Frank and kind they are, virtuous and intelligent, hardy and industrious, too. It was most creditable to them that, when the settlement was formed, they took care to bring the school-master and minister of religion with them. I could be well content to live and die here, but the land all around is either taken up, or far too high in price for me to think of buying a portion of it."

Were I able, and did time and space permit, I could well desire to allude to other places I visited, and sights that I saw during this journey. The sail down the St. Lawrence, among the Thousand Islands, was like a lovely passing panorama of peaceful, yet wild beauty; perfectly magical. The shooting of the mad, foaming rapids, was grand and exciting in the ex-

treme; almost fearfully so,—it was really sublime. These scenes time can never efface from my memory. The scenery of the White Mountains seemed beautiful and grand. In one sense,—I had almost said fortunately,—some of the railroad bridges had been swept away by a freshet, and thus along with other passengers, I had to travel a good many miles, midst the fine scenery in wagons, which afforded me time and opportunity to get many fine views and learn various particulars concerning the localities.

On February 20, 1856, my ever dear and affectionate mother departed this life in Glasgow, full of years, good works, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. She lived and died a Christian. Oh! how good it is to know and believe, that—

“A few short years of evil past,
We reach the happy shore
Where death-divided friends at last
Shall meet to part no more!”

1858-1861.

THE TIME at length came when we had to bid farewell to dear Elm Grove. Upon March 31, 1858, we left that place and removed to Stratford, Canada West, where we expected to be able to settle down on a farm. The cause of our leaving was this: my employers had met with some reverses and concluded to give up their gardens at Elm Grove, and dispense with my services. We left the dear spot where we had lived so long in peace, contentment and happiness, and where we had brought up our family in quiet, though homely comfort, with extreme regret. We felt sad, too, to part with our many kind friends. Our journey to Canada was one of loneliness and anxiety for the coming future. We knew no one where we were going and my means were quite limited, being the scanty savings and gleanings from the small wages of past years of toil.

Had I been able at this time to have secured a good situation or seen any prospect of having a home about Providence, I would not have taken this step. Times were very unpropitious then, and there were many out of employment, and a general monetary and commercial panic and stagnation of business prevailing. I thought if I could only manage to own and cultivate a piece of land, either as a farm, nursery, or garden, it would be the best thing for myself and family, and form a permanent home for us all. In Providence there seemed no chance for me to succeed as a florist or market-gardener. The ground was fully occupied, and even supposing it had been otherwise, I felt I had not money enough to commence any thing of the kind at that particular time. Before going to Stratford, I wrote to a gentleman to whom I had been recommended by a mutual friend, asking for information

concerning various matters connected with my going there. I told him my age and occupation in life, the number and ages of my family, and the amount of money I possessed. He wrote me in answer that I need not be afraid to come on with my family, as he had no doubt we should get along very well. I was afraid that I had too little money, which indeed I soon found to be true, and which ultimately proved the cause of the failure of the project. The gentleman alluded to meant well, but, like myself, he was mistaken as to the amount of money necessary to succeed in such an undertaking. We arrived at Stratford on the evening of April 2, 1858. It was then the terminus of the railroad into that part of the country, which was the chief reason of our going to, and stopping at, that place. My family went to a boarding-house for a fortnight, while I itinerated the country far and near, in quest of a homestead. Many a desirable place I saw for sale, but the price that was asked settled the matter against me. Next I set out for the frontier settlements, then some sixty miles to the north and west of Stratford. Many a weary mile I traveled through that country, far from roads or habitations of man, guided for many a long mile by the glazed trees, or trees whose barks were chipped by the hatchet to point out the dubious path to the emigrant and hunter. I had an aching and anxious heart when I thought of my family and how I was to find a home for them. The awful stillness and loneliness of those dark forests I can never forget. Oh, how oppressive sometimes it was to me! I returned to Stratford, and we all concluded that instead of going to the frontier settlements, it would be better to purchase a small farm then for sale in the town of Ellice, some two miles from Stratford. This we did, and were glad to move into our little log cabin, midst the tall trees of the forest, where we could be together and have a home of our own, homely though it was, instead of living in a noisy and crowded boarding-house, which was fast using up our little store of money. It was indeed a great relief, and we commenced, heart and hand, to clear up and prepare the ground of the part that was cleared of trees, for the crop of wheat and potatoes which we soon got in, and then we commenced to war, I and the two oldest boys, with the

giants of the forest, with our great, heavy backwoodsmen's axes. We all would have soon come to like the life, but the truth would flash across our minds that our money was nearly expended in the purchase of the place and two cows, and, that still the place was not fully paid for, a small mortgage being upon it, and how were we to live meanwhile until we could clear up the land and fence it all in. From the youngest to the oldest we felt that our present circumstances were by no means good. This we could have got over, but the future seemed dark and uninviting. The children felt much discouraged about their school; they had to walk several miles to it through a thick forest, where bears and wolves prowled around; while the tuition given in that little log hut was none of the best. Finally, we concluded to leave before our money was all gone. I thought of going to New York or some other part of the States, and taking a gardener's situation, leaving my family on the place in Canada, until I could send for them. Having received some encouraging letters from friends in Providence, especially about a gardener's situation then open in Dighton, it was deemed best for me to set out for that place, which I did, leaving my family behind in the meantime. When I got to Dighton I found I could get the place, which, however, was only for the season, and not for the winter. I concluded not to take it and went back to Providence, where I found I could get work by the day as a gardener. My friends advised me to take such work, hire a tenement, and send on for my family, which I did; so, at the end of a few months, we were all safe together under one roof at number 100 Power Street; for which mercy and privilege I trust we were then, and shall ever feel, grateful to the Father of mercies.

COMPOSED UPON SEEING MY FORMER COTTAGE-HOME
AT ELM GROVE, AFTER RETURNING
FROM CANADA.

BY WILLIAM NISBET.

O, could I feel the joys I've felt,
Thou bonnie cozie cot,
When 'neath thy sheltering roof I dwelt,
So favored was my lot.

It pains me now the change to see,—
No wife with winsome smile,
Peers thro' the pane to welcome me ;
And all my cares beguile.

No blithesome bairns, with looks so bright,
Are playing on the green ;
Or hasten out in fond delight,
To lead their father in.

Their cabin now, is rude and lone,—
An unpropitious home ;
Midst forests dark of wild Huron,
Where the lone glades they roam !

My own kind mate there, mourns the day,
With care and toil opprest ;
While sad I wander far away,
A home, once more in quest.

Thou loved abode, thro' gladsome years !
We ne'er had left thy shade ;
Nor wandered forth, afar, in tears,
But sternest fate forbade !

No spot, save that where I was born —
With thee can I compare ;
And long on earth should I sojourn, —
There's none I'll deem more fair !

Tho' homeless, yet I'll ne'er deplore, —
Since God his word has given, —
That all who ask Him and adore —
Shall find a home in heaven !

We would have been very well satisfied to remain in Canada, provided we could have made our living in it with any degree of comfort. The idea of going there was wise enough and I have never thought it otherwise since, but it was a great mistake to go with such a small sum of money as we then had. I have a good opinion of, and a warm heart for, Canada. During our short stay there, the people uniformly treated us with great kindness and even respect. Our neighbors in Ellice, the majority of whom were Irish Catholics, were exceedingly kind and attentive. Their larger children, on their way to and from school, with our children, were in the habit of carrying some of them on their backs when they got tired by the way. I know of no kinder people in the world than the Irish; a kind word and a little kindly treatment, goes a long way in securing their affections. We found some very kind friends also in the village of Stratford, among whom was Mr. Mackie, pastor of a small Baptist church there. He left that part soon after we did, and is still a very faithful minister of Jesus Christ, in the eastern portion of the province.

On October 1, 1858, I took charge of the gardens and hot-houses of General James, which situation I held for five months. I liked this place very much. The General and his family treated me with great kindness. I would gladly have remained longer, but the General's means not admitting of his carrying on the place, I accepted the offer of my present employer, Henry S. Mansfield, Esq., to take charge of his gardens and hothouses.

On March 1, 1859, we left Providence, once more, and moved to Millville, Mass., where we are now, in good health, having a good home and many kind friends. When I review the lengthened past and think of all the sins and temptations, the perils and dangers, the trials and perplexities, the cares and sorrows through which I have passed during my various sojournings and wanderings through life, to the present hour; when I recall all these in order and think of the past and present goodness of God towards me; above all, when I think of the great and unmerited goodness of God in calling me to know and believe the gospel of his Son, I am amazed! and

feel constrained to say, and exclaim with the author of the sweet hymn,—

“When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise!”

I am conscious of the many defects of this imperfect sketch and story of my life, the want of proper system and arrangement, and imperfection of language, and regret much that I have been unable to write it in a better style and manner.

I have written it in order to cultivate and recreate my own mind, and to refresh and stir up my memory, and call forth my gratitude to God for past benefits and mercies, which I am too prone to forget.

Could I have reason to believe that hereafter it shall prove really interesting and useful to any dear relative, or kind friend, or any person whatever, whether I be still alive in this world or entered upon that unseen and eternal one to which all are fast hastening, that fact alone would have been inducement enough for me to write it.

WILLIAM NISBET.

MILLVILLE, MASS., Jan. 5, 1861.

1862-1868.

HAVING engaged to take charge of the gardens of my present employer, Mrs. Moses B. Ives, we left Millville and moved to Providence, March 1, 1862. The reasons which induced me to do so, were the prospect of a better home, a more permanent situation, and greater religious and educational privileges for myself and family. In none of these prospects or hopes have we been disappointed. My present situation, thus far, through the goodness of God, both for myself and family, has been the best I have ever had. My worthy employer, Mrs. Ives, has always treated me with the utmost kindness and consideration. I may say the same of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Henry G. Russell. In some respects I scarcely realize that I am a servant. Gratitude prompts me to say also, that her lamented son, the late Captain Thomas P. Ives, uniformly acted towards me in a most kind, courteous and gentlemanly manner. I have much respect for the memory of that young man, cut off so early in life, and dying so far from home. He was wise and thoughtful beyond his years, and bade fair to become a most honored and useful member of society. The untimely death, too, on the battle-field of Antietam, of his pious cousin, Mr. Robert H. Ives, Jr., whom I had learned to respect, was a very melancholy event.

Shortly after I came to Providence, Rev. William Douglas, the chaplain of the State Prison, invited me to teach a bible class composed of prisoners, which invitation I accepted and continued to teach the class until the infirmity of years deprived me of this privilege. It has been a profitable exercise to my own soul, and I trust it has not been in vain as to its good effects upon others. To Mr. Douglas also, he having first introduced me, I was indebted for an opportunity of oc-

casionally preaching in several of the smaller Baptist meeting-houses in the city and surrounding country, as well as in the State institutions, the Seamen's Bethel and other places. On August 27, 1863, my wife and I became members of the First Baptist Church, in this city, which connection has been blessed to us in many respects. In the spring and summer of 1863, I succeeded in remodeling the gardens of my employer to her entire satisfaction and that of her friends. The following summer, the present fine range of hothouses were completed, the plans for which it was my privilege to draw. Since then, I have also remodeled the gardens of Mr. Henry G. Russell, to his satisfaction. In the spring of 1866, Mrs. Ives purchased the beautiful country-seat of the late Dr. Hall, on Warwick Neck, which I was enabled also to improve and lay out in a proper and satisfactory manner. Her acquisition of this place has afforded me many pleasant opportunities for an agreeable change of work and scene. I have likewise considerably improved, and in some measure made my own little garden profitable. So, that, although I have at times had to work very hard, both bodily and mentally, yet I have had much real pleasure withal and much reason to be thankful that these matters have gone on so well.

In the autumn of 1864, I had a very pleasant journey to New York and Philadelphia, after plants for the new green-houses. I had some pleasant meetings with old friends, among others, my brother-in-law, Mr. James Angus, of West Farms. His collection of insects was worth while making the journey alone to see. I also met with and communed with the Scotch Baptist Church, in New York, of which my friend, Mr. James Bannister, is elder, a son-in-law of the venerable Mr. Thomas Hogg, the former senior elder. In Philadelphia I saw my old friend, Mr. John Sheddan, at the Custom House. I had not seen him since we were members of the same Baptist Church, in the west of Scotland, twenty-three years previous. Our meeting was a pleasant one indeed.

Again in the autumn of 1866, I had another very pleasant journey. I went to the State of Maine in quest of a vessel-load of wood ashes for Mr. Russell's farm. On this trip I enjoyed seeing so much beautiful, wild and romantic scenery.

I visited Portland, where I had spent a day and night in 1856, Rockland, Augusta, and other cities and towns. I staid a day and night with my old friend Mr. Alexander Forsyth, gardener for Mr. Lang, the celebrated stock breeder at Vassalboro. We spent a very agreeable time. Mr. Forsyth took me around the country to see several interesting scenes, among which was China Lake and the wild woods about it, which I found rich in botany. I wrote out a journal or little sketch of this journey at the time.

In August, 1868, I was enabled to take a very pleasant journey, accompanied by my wife and daughter Jessie, to New York, Poughkeepsie, Morristown, and various other places in the neighborhood of New York. This was a very pleasant occasion. We had a fine sail up the Hudson River to Poughkeepsie, and admired the fine scenery very much. On our way back to New York we visited Netherwood, where we first settled in America, and which we had not seen for over twenty-four years. It recalled many memories of past days. The woods, the fields, the houses, the roads and fences, were much as we left them, with the noble river still slowly sweeping along. But the people, where were they? Few we found that remembered us in those bye-gone days. Nearly all were either in the "house appointed for all living," or had moved away to other parts; while those that remained were so changed they did not seem like the same persons we formerly knew. The house we lived in had been removed into the village of New Hamburg, a mile distant, which I went and visited; excepting its position it seemed unchanged. The cherry-trees, the tall cedar, the pear and quince trees that grew around the house were still undisturbed; and there, too, was the grape-vine, but the arbor which it once adorned had been broken down and gone to decay. The old cellar walls remained and were overgrown with weeds, and the little wicket gate, now never used, was still in its place, but hanging on rusty hinges. We looked all around with mingled feelings of pleasure, interest and sadness. It seemed but yesterday that we had lived, worked and walked around there. Now, how changed! Fit emblem of life, the world, and all sublunary things.

We thanked God that although "Here we have no continu-

ing city, yet we seek one to come, whose builder and maker is God," and for the hope of having there, "An house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." We felt grateful, too, to Him for protecting, providing for, and blessing us during the many years that had passed away since we went out from that place to seek another home. During this journey, we visited several relatives of my wife and many kind friends. I ever feel that "auld acquaintance should ne'er be forgot."

Amid all the many mercies and pleasures we have enjoyed since we came to America, and since I wrote the story of my life, at Millville, we have been frequently called upon to mourn the loss of dear relatives and friends. My dear sisters, Mary Anna, Helen and Isabella, have all passed away from earth, as also my dear brother Henry. My brother Douglas and myself being now the sole survivors of a family of thirteen children.

In the land of my birth I have no near relatives with the exception of three nieces, one nephew, and one grand-nephew. Two of these nieces are children of my sister Mary Anna. Their father, Mr. Ferguson, is also dead. It is pleasing to me to know that these little orphans are well cared for and have a small competence of their own. The other niece and nephew are children of my brother James. This nephew, John, is seldom at home, being a sailor. My grand-nephew is grandson of my brother Henry.

It would afford me unspeakable pleasure to go to Scotland and see these dear young people, none of whom I have seen excepting the children of my brother James; but, alas! the time and expense it would take to visit the land of my birth is more than I can yet afford.

There is one who died in this city, some time ago, whom it is no presumption, even in me, to call my friend, for such he was indeed,—one whose memory I shall ever revere,—Dr. Francis Wayland! The most humble-minded man I ever knew. I speak not of his piety, his labors, his learning and ability; others can and have done that. He was all that his warmest friends and admirers have ever claimed for him in these respects.

It was through his ardent love of horticulture, that I be-

came acquainted with him soon after my coming to Providence. It was my privilege to advise and even direct him in many of his garden operations, as well as to draw the plans for his gardens and grounds on Angell Street, and superintend their execution. I remember the many interesting and profitable conversations I had with him, and the prayer meetings I attended in his house, when he always called upon me to take a part. To him I am indebted for the loan and gift of many a useful book. It was pleasing to me to find that his sentiments as to church order and the preaching of the gospel were so much akin to those of the Scotch Baptists. He asked to see the account I had written and which was then printed, of that denomination, which seemed to please and interest him very much. The conversation I had with him on that subject I wrote down at the time and still retain. Well do I remember that hot and sultry day in August, 1849, when he walked all the way from his house on College Street to Elm Grove, to enquire concerning the family of Mr. Mitchell, the jobbing gardener, who had just died of cholera, and how he placed a sum of money in my hands for their assistance, "in case," said he, "they may not be very well off!" Nor do I forget that cold winter evening, upon his learning I had to leave Elm Grove, and was about to go to Canada, when he walked down to our house to enquire about it and express his regret. "My poor, dear brother," said he, "I am sorry, sorry you have got to leave." He seemed really sad and full of concern; and then we all knelt down with him while he offered up a most fervent and affecting prayer, commending us to the God of Abraham, who went out to a land he knew not. A beautiful simile, from which, he drew and applied to our case in his prayer. The evening before we left for Canada, my wife and I took tea with him and his family. Such condescension and kindness I never met from any man of his learning and station in society. At another time, too, he sent for me to take dinner with the celebrated German preacher, Mr. Oncken, at his house, which invitation I accepted. I have still a letter written by him recommending me as a good gardener and consistent Christian. I delight to think of and pay honor to such a man. But why should I attempt to speak his praise?

His memory is blessed. "His praise is in all the churches." He rests from his labors, and enjoys his bright reward in heaven. I thank God for raising up such a man and for the grace bestowed upon him.

And there is another who although of lowly walk in life, "and toils obscure," yet his memory shall ever be dear to me — my worthy predecessor in my present situation, the late Mr. Richard Dalglish. "An honest man," and one of the kindest and best friends I ever knew. I found him a friend when I first came to Providence an entire stranger, and as such, firm, kind and true, he ever remained. I often think of him while I am working around in these beautiful gardens. The trees, shrubs and vines he planted and tended so long and so well, are pleasing mementos to me of the dear, good, old man. Thus we pass away; "friend after friend departs."

Lo! thousands to their endless home,
Are swiftly borne away;
And we are to the margin come,
And soon must launch as they!

I realize that my time flies on apace. I have now fully entered upon the confines of old age, although I scarcely feel it, being in my fifty-third year. Far am I from believing that as youth and middle age fade and pass away, that man's hopes and happiness must of necessity fade and pass away too. No, old age can have, and has, its joys, as well as youth. God does not leave nor cast away his people in their old age. He has declared he never will leave nor forsake them; that even to hoary hairs he will be with them. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Of course I know not how it may be with me if I am spared to feel the full burden of old age. But this is my present testimony. I give it humbly and with gratitude to God. I think I grow happier as I grow older. I am not at all tired of life. Why should I be? Yet I do not regret that my days are passing away. As they pass I can say: "Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee!" At no period of my life have I enjoyed more, or even as much, of true and settled peace, contentment and happiness of mind than I do

now. Matters which at one time would have greatly annoyed me, now scarcely trouble me at all; I trust God is teaching me to cast all my care, and stay my mind upon Him.

As to bodily health, I believe I am, and have been, one of the most fortunate of men, having never had any very serious or prolonged illness, or having been confined over one day at a time to my bed. I have been exempt from rheumatism and many other diseases to which hard-working people are subject; and being still free from any bodily ailment or disease as far as I know. Under God I attribute this to temperance, regularity and due carefulness. I joined the temperance movement when I was twenty-one years of age, and used very little intoxicating liquor before that time, and I never have used it as a beverage since, but merely as a medicine, and that very seldom. I have also endeavored to beware of surfeiting as well as drunkenness. I never have allowed myself to be intemperate in eating or to long after dainty fare. I have eaten comparatively very little animal food. I know, however, that I cannot claim much credit for this, as my circumstances have generally been such as not to permit of much excess in this particular; but, indeed, I never cared a very great deal about it, probably because I was not much used to it in my younger days. The use of tobacco I have ignored from my youth. I have been in the habit of going regularly to bed at an early hour, and before lying down I have always made it a practice, if at all possible, to divest my mind of all anxious thoughts and cares. As to early rising I have had to practice that through life, willing or unwilling. I dare not boast of these things. God alone has enabled me to attend to them, and has blessed them as means of bodily health and strength. "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord."

There is another matter for which I must thank and glorify Him, as one who has "obtained favor from the Lord," I have found a wife "Who feareth the Lord; and looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness." Another great favor from the Lord is this: our children, thus far, continue very healthy, dutiful, industrious and well behaved. I trust they fear the Lord. "May He deliver

them from every evil work and preserve them unto his heavenly kingdom."

On my own behalf I thank Him that he still enables me to put my trust in him, and to love the Lord Jesus Christ and to esteem him increasingly precious the longer I live. Oh, to be able to love Him more fervently and serve him more faithfully.

This day, the last of the year, reminds me of the rapid flight of time. My story, too, like the year itself, draws to a close. Yet a little while and my life's full story will be told. Of the residue of the life I shall live in the flesh, may it be recorded on high that "I lived by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Thus shall my name, even my worthless name, be written in the book of life. It is not for me to know whether I shall ever make another entry on these pages, or if I am permitted to do so, in what circumstances or condition of body or mind I shall do it. But this I do, I thank God for the mercies of the past, and humbly trust him for a future store.

"Here I raise mine Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I've come;
Trusting, Lord, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home!"

WILLIAM NISBET,
50 Power Street, Providence, R. I.

DECEMBER 31, 1868.

1869-1875.

AFTER seven years have stealthily slipped away, I resume my story. I can scarcely realize that it is seven years since I wrote the foregoing lines. As I grow older the time seems to grow shorter. A year to a youth of fifteen or twenty years of age, seems a much longer space of time than to a man of sixty. Seven years are indeed but a brief space of time ; compared to eternity, as nothing. And yet it comprises the tenth part of a long lifetime ; the tenth part of man's allotted span. Mighty changes in many ways, have taken place during this time and momentous in their results. How many have passed away as the grass, as the flowers of the field and entered upon their eternal and unchangeable state. How apt we are to fail to note the rapid flight of time, and leave undone much that should be done. Well may we join in the prayer of the psalmist : "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom." And the more so in view of the uncertainty as well as the shortness of life. The divine word declares,—“The days of our years are three score years and ten.” How just and plain, and how solemn and necessary the injunction,—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.”

These years have passed away smoothly and peacefully, being fraught with fewer changes and vicissitudes to me personally, and during which, perhaps, I have enjoyed more real happiness than in any other like period of my life. Not but what these years like all others have brought troubles and perplexities, for such things are inseparable from the life of man in this world. And the divine assertion will ever hold true, “Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full

of trouble." But why recall their memory and brood over them? Let me rather remember my mercies and blessings. Not failing to realize that afflictions are necessary and can and will be overruled by the Father of mercies, for good to all who are rightly exercised by them. Viewed in this light, troubles appear mercies too. "All things work together for good to them that love God." I have been enabled to retain the same situation and dwell in the same house, and have been blessed with general good health, a most amiable and affectionate wife, dutiful children, and a great many kind friends, together with a good situation and considerate employers. My church relationship, too, has been pleasant and spiritually profitable, and highly privileged with a good ministry and the society of many Christian friends and opportunities for personal usefulness in the cause of Christ. I have been enabled still, I trust, to hold fast the faith, in word and deed, and to continue to esteem Christ increasingly precious.

"Streams of mercies never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

My attendance as a teacher in the Sunday School at the State Prison, has been a work of much interest and profit to me; helping in no small measure to keep alive my interest in the welfare and salvation of others, without which, personal religion never thrives. My frequent visits to Warwick Neck, in the oversight of the beautiful summer residence of my employers, has been a source of much pleasure to me, in breaking up the monotony of the care of a city garden, and affording me from time to time sweet glimpses of rural scenes. Refreshing my eye and heart at sight of the sea, the hills, the woods, the birds and wild flowers. Inhaling and smelling the invigorating odor and breath of kind nature; adding withal, I doubt not, to health, both of body and mind. I cannot tell how much I have been soothed, refreshed and instructed by an occasional solitary walk into the woods, or along the shore of that most beautiful locality, and listening to the sound of the waves on the shore, the songs of birds, the humming of bees and the music of the winds softly sighing through the

trees, while my eyes have been satisfied with the surrounding scenes of peace and beauty. Such privileges I desire to be truly grateful for. For to me to see and mingle amid the scenes of nature has ever been essential to my happiness ; and in this respect, old age has wrought no change in me. It saddens me to think how many of the children of poverty and toil are debarred from such blessings and privileges. The pale artist who plies the sickly trade, the tiny "weans," the care-worn housewife and mother, and the wan and weary toiling maiden, denizens of the dark alleys and narrow streets and unwholesome tenements, stores and workshops of the noisy and feverish city. How highly favored may I not consider my condition, while with Beattie I exclaim :—

" O Nature how in every charm supreme !
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new !
O for the voice and fire of Seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due ! "

Occasional visits, too, to Newport and its ocean cliffs and waves, with my family, and at times to New York and Boston, as well as to Lowell and Nashua, I have felt very pleasant and beneficial. Meeting with old friends and acquaintances upon such occasions, have formed green spots indeed in my life and memory. I have been favored also with visits from my brother Douglas and his wife, of Charleston, S. C., and also of my two nieces from Edinburgh, now of Charleston.

Early in the year 1870, I bought a piece of land for a home-stead, on Pitman Street, on what was formerly the Moses Brown farm, or Elm Grove, where I had lived previously, so many years, and where most of our children were born and brought up. In the summer of 1872, I had a goodly house built upon this land. In this I was aided by a legacy kindly bequeathed me by my late dear brother Henry. The acquisition and improvement of this little property, together with the hope that it may yet be a quiet retreat for me in old age, or for my dear wife or children when I am gone, has afforded me much pleasure and comfort, and I can truly say that it has not made me worldly or high minded as yet, and I trust never will. It has simply made me grateful to God and more con-

tented. Many times it has afforded me great pleasure to walk to this sweet spot, for it is indeed all of that in itself and surrounding scenery of wood and water, and see my daughter with her husband and child living comfortable and happy under that roof. When I was leaving Elm Grove, through no fault of mine, many years ago, to go to Canada, or when we were dwelling in our homely little log house in the wilds of that country, and for years afterwards, I never could have dreamed I should ever own a homestead on the place where I had lived so long and so happy. It would have seemed of all earthly things the most unlikely, and yet almost the most desirable. It is a matter of continual astonishment to me, that I should be enabled to return to this city and own that place. I do feel abundantly grateful to God for it, and recognize his special interposition in the matter. But above all I praise Him for the hope and promise of eternal life : "*An house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*" "*An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away.*"

I have always had a great desire to revisit the land of my birth, and see the spot where I was born, and the few dear relatives and friends of childhood and youth yet alive ; but hitherto, I have never been able to afford the time and the money. I should like so well, after my return, to record what I had seen and thought and felt during such a visit. Whether I shall ever have that privilege, of course I know not. I fear the time for that has now gone past. But it is a matter by no means of vital importance. Viewed in the light of eternity, what matters it? "The things seen are but temporal, the things unseen eternal."

I desire to thank God that matters are so well with me and mine as they are. Our household now consists of but few members. The noisy glee of happy children is hushed and stilled. I sometimes almost think the house is too quiet. Our children have all grown to be men and women, and, excepting the two who still abide with us, have homes of their own. We oft miss them, especially when the evening shades prevail. But it is all well. It is as it should be. These and many other things remind me that life is far spent, that I am now old ; and yet in some respects I do not feel so. But I am in my

sixtieth year, and realize that the time of my sojourning here cannot be long now.

I am by no means tired of life, and yet —

“ I would not live alway,
I ask not to stay,
Where storm after storm
Rises dark o'er the way.”

But one thing I ask, that while I live, I may live to the Lord. And that when I die, I may die to the Lord. And this I wish to record, that “ *Goodness and mercy have followed me all my life,*” and that through grace I have a good hope of eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

WILLIAM NISBET,
January 1, 1876.

1876.

THIS memorable centennial year of the Nation's birth, has also been a memorable year in my life. In it I have completed my sixtieth year. Quite an epoch in any one's life. And in it I have been privileged to live in my own house. For many years I have longed for and strived to attain this privilege. I ever ardently loved my early home, but ever since I left it, have had but faint hopes, indeed, of returning to it. With Goldsmith, I can in a measure say,—

“ In all my wanderings 'round this world of care,—
In all my griefs, and God has given my share,
I still had hopes my latest years to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down.”

In some respects it was indeed providential for me and mine that we had a home of our own to go to, as the good old cottage, No. 81 Power Street, formerly No. 50, in which we had lived so long and happily, having become worn out by reason of age, and being beyond repair, it was taken down in the march of improvements. On June 28, 1876, we left it and moved to No. 80 Pitman Street, still continuing to hold my situation in other respects, as usual, under my kind and worthy employers.

This home is indeed in every way most satisfactory and agreeable to me, being really all I could reasonably expect or desire. A good two-and-a-half-story house, suitable either for one or two families, with a well-enclosed garden of upwards of one-third of an acre, filled with choice trees, shrubs and plants, and thanks to God, obtained honestly and paid for. It is situated in a very good neighborhood and in a most beau-

tiful spot, well known and much endeared to us, as being a part of the old Elm Grove, or Moses Brown farm. It has all the advantages also of both a town and country abode. Like my early home, it is fast by the wild wood, and near the water brink, where the Seekonk mingles its waters with those of the salt sea, on whose placid bosom barks of the ocean may now and then be seen gliding along. In their season, the song of the bluebird, the song sparrow, the robin and the oriole, with other sweet choristers may be heard from early dawn to dewy eve. While now and then the wary crow may be seen flying around. The woodpecker, seen and heard, "pecking at the hollow beech-tree;" and the bold sea-gull and soaring osprey sailing above the tide. At times, too, the eerie screech of the lonely night-heron may be heard in the gloaming, or further into the mirky night.

The woods, the river shores and salt marshes, the glens, the banks and braes around at no great distance abound in all manner of plants, trees, shrubs and wild flowers. The sturdy oak, the hardy pine, the stout, graceful hemlock, the fruitful chestnut, the massive sycamore, the spreading elm, the useful ash and maple, the walnut and red cedar, the twining wild grape vine, the graceful virgin's-bower, the sweet-brier or eglantine, the honey-suckle, the wild rose, the sweet-fern, the fragrant candleberry, myrtle, the beautiful kalmia laurel, the trailing arbutus, "sweet harbinger of spring," the sea lavender, and golden-rods, starworts and Michaelmas daisy, and many more of the gay floral band, unfold their cheering petals and shed their reviving fragrance around, from opening April to chilly November.

The view from the windows of our house is at all times most pleasing and interesting, at least, to me.

Oft, in the stillness of the early night, I have sat at our little bay window, looking through a most picturesque bower, formed by the overhanging and pendant branches of the trees in the adjoining grove, gazing spell-bound at the peaceful lake or expanded river near by, all illuminated, sparkling and glowing in the bright, silvery rays of the silent, lovely moon. The

sweet vision, so insensibly calming and stilling the mind, so filling it with peace and hope and joy, that I could truly say :

“ I was for that time lifted above earth,
And possessed joys not promised in my birth.”

Who that has any poetry or piety in their soul, any love for nature or nature's God, could fail to be thankful for, and happy in, such a home? so far as happiness is to be expected or found in a sinful and transitory world. At the same time realizing there is still infinitely greater cause for gratitude and joy, at the thought that while the merciful and ever blessed God gives us sinful creatures so much happiness in this troubled world, in various ways, and much in particular in viewing and contemplating the glorious works and scenes of nature he has made, that all is not worthy to be compared to the glorious scenes of heaven, and the things He hath prepared there for those that love Him.

I often think, what would the mere possession of such a home, and the view of its beautiful surroundings avail, if there was no peace, if there were tumults and broils in the family. God be praised, we know nothing of this. By His grace, we have tried to serve Him, and he has delivered us from such things.

Although our children have mostly left us, and we thus at times are apt to feel a little lonely, yet, we are cheered from time to time by their visits ; and from having the pleasure of our daughter Jessie, with her kind husband, and their daughter, dear little Katie, occupying a portion of the house with us. And we have many kind friends and good neighbors.

I realize now, that my time is far spent. That “my days are gliding swiftly by.” But blessed be God, they are, thus far, gliding by in peace and hope, and although I know I am indeed “*a pilgrim stranger,*” “*Having here no continuing city,*” yet, through Divine help, I can and do, “*Seek one to come, whose builder and maker is God.*” There, in that building of God, that eternal, heavenly house not made with hands, there are many mansions. Mansions of never-ending peace and rest and joy for all that will enter. For all that believe

in, love and obey the Lord Jesus Christ. Long ago, "He sought me when a stranger—wandering from the fold of God." I have known Him in youth, in middle age, and in old age. And now, when I am old and gray headed, I believe He will not forsake me, but will deliver me from every evil work, and preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom. I thank Him for such a glorious hope and for every blessing of every kind. To Him be praise and honor, dominion and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

WILLIAM NISBET,
November 23, 1876.

1877-1885.

YEARS have passed away since I wrote the above, years of goodness and mercy. Blessed be God. He still sustains, strengthens and comforts me. Through grace I can truly say, I have fellowship with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ. Christ is still precious to me. Yes; more precious than ever. God has enabled me to grow in grace and taught and inclined me to cheerfully submit to His will in all things; to trust him for every thing; to commit all my ways unto Him; casting all my care upon Him. Oh, what peace, what serene joy has he not often filled my soul with! What *foretastes* of the coming glory! Oh, that all could feel what I have felt and do feel. How they would love the Saviour and rejoice in the hope of the rest that remaineth for the people of God. I have known something of late years of real bodily sickness, and was at one time brought indeed low. Oh, I bless God for that. It drew me nearer than ever to himself. Oh, I trust I am more humble than ever, and I know I now see things in a different light than formerly.

My worthy employer is deceased, and the hothouses about to be taken down, and the gardens and my situation entirely changed. I am fast growing old. The time of my departure cannot be far off, and "change and decay in all around I see." I have, indeed, to fight and contend with an evil nature, to resist and overcome temptations and trials, and am often led "to groan, being burdened." But withal I do rejoice in the Lord. I, too, can say, through grace I know Him whom I have believed. Yes; all, all on earth whom I knew and loved in my youth, as far as I know, are dead and gone, but still I know Him,—yes, better than any or all besides. For He has been with me through these many years. Knows all about

my secret thoughts. To Him I have come in all my sorrows and trials, and He has sustained, comforted and relieved me, and I know and believe he will deliver me from every evil work, and preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.

At present he blesses me with health, and many temporal comforts and blessings, for which I praise Him much. For I know now the value of health at least, more than ever. It is my great desire and earnest prayer, "To finish my course with joy." More and more to have that mind in me which was in Christ Jesus. To be meek and lowly in heart. Ah, how far short I ever have been in this! To be pure in heart. Holy in thought, word and deed,—the only way to be truly happy and the only state to be in, so that the Spirit of God may abide with us. Well, the time will come when we shall be freed from this body of sin and death. To sin, to sorrow, to suffer no more! To see, to be with, and to be like Him for ever more. Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

WILLIAM NISBET,

April 4, 1885.

80 Pitman Street, Providence, R. I.

The author of this narrative died at his residence in the city of Providence, Monday evening, June 7, 1886, and was laid at rest on the following Thursday, in the family burial lot in Swan Point Cemetery.

The last year of his life was passed quietly in attending to his usual duties. His books were constant companions, especially his Bible. He was unusually calm and happy in mind, taking a loving interest in his family and grandchildren and all of his friends.

Thus ended, in the seventieth year of his age, the long and useful life of a sincere and devoted Christian, and a man honored and beloved by all who knew him.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

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